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The Use of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge in Public Government Programs and Services in the Northwest Territories.

by

Stephanie M. Irlbacher ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Department of Political Science

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled The Use of Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge in Public Government Programs and Services in the Northwest Territories in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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Abstract

This study examines the use of Aboriginal traditional knowledge in public government programs and services in the Northwest Territories, in accordance with the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) traditional knowledge policy. The process leading up the the policy's introduction is traced, with an description of the processes and Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group, and the GNWT response to the group's report. The scope and extent of the policy's implementation within government is assessed within and between two government departments, based on research within each: the Departments of Health and Social Services, and Renewable Resources. Interviews with representatives of Aboriginal organizations and stakeholders were also conducted. The research findings and theories of development, including dependency and colonialism, and the rational-legal theory of public administration contribute to a better understanding of factors facilitating and obstructing the policy's implementation within government.

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Introduction

In many respects, the story of the Northwest Territories (NWT) has been one of an unrelenting search for accommodation. Populated with several distinct ethnic groups, a majority Aboriginal and minority non-Aboriginal, accommodation has been achieved in the social, economic, and political spheres. A mixed economy has sprung up, composed of inter-related subsistence and wage labour sectors, awareness of Aboriginal rights and fundamental shifts in socio-political power have begun to flow from the settlement of outstanding land claims, and a clear majority of Aboriginal MLAs set the territory's political priorities in a consensus style legislature.

However, accommodation has not been reached in the public administration of the NWT. Despite devolution, an Aboriginal leadership, and concerted attempts to populate its bureaucracy with a home-grown civil service, the government's fundamentally western European philosophical institutional orientation persists. Despite a demographically unique constituency, the bureaucracy of the NWT is in many respects indistinguishable from those operating in the provinces.

This is where the problem lies. The dissonance between the southern bureaucratic institutions and the distinctly northern economic, social and political realities has been well established by the Traditional Knowledge Working Group(TKWG). In this study, the use of Aboriginal traditional knowledge, as defined by the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Traditional Knowledge Policy, is examined within two government departments: Renewable Resources and Health and Social Services. The first department has the lead responsibility for the traditional knowledge policy and uses traditional knowledge regularly within aspects of its programs and

services. The Department of Health and Social Services provides services which all northerners, at some point in their lives, will make use of. Within each department, factors contributing to the scope and extent of the policy's implementation are investigated, to determine which ones facilitate or obstruct the policy's implementation, and how. Prior to discussing methodological issues related to the research undertaken, the thesis structure is outlined below.

Chapter One

Circumstances and processes culminating in the GNWT's Traditional Knowledge Policy are documented, including relevant historical, cultural, and political factors. These factors include the evolution of NWT government structures and institutions, and politicization of Aboriginal groups and organizations. Issues surrounding Aboriginal land claims, such as self-government, division of the NWT, and constitutional development are considered.

The final section reviews the government's response to the Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group, which was issued in the form of a policy to be adopted on a government-wide scale. The response was met with criticism from non-government organizations.

Chapter Two

The second chapter provides a theoretical analysis of the NWT's development employing the theory of internal colonialism to provide a basic characterization of the NWT's development to the present day. Max Weber's

legal-rational model of bureaucracy provides an understanding of the kind of bureaucracy on which the NWT administration is based.

A theoretical outline of formal bureaucratic structures in the second section provides a context within which the bureaucracies in question are examined. Both are modern bureaucracies in keeping with standard western-style operations. Because the traditional knowledge policy is geared towards incorporating indigenous and therefore "foreign" values and priorities into the organizational structures, the policy proposes changes to the value-based underpinnings of the bureaucratic philosophy in addition to structural aspects.

Changes to the formal western-based bureaucratic system are inherent in the policy. This is discussed in the next section. It will undertake an overview of variables and factors impacting on implementation of the policy. The kinds of changes expected through the policy's implementation, and what this would mean for the bureaucracy are explored by examining factors such as practical changes to be made, and aspects of formal and substantive operations which would be considered. These include variables such as training, substantive changes in procedures, bureaucratic will, and institutional flexibility.

The next section describes the two departments in question: Health and Social Services and Renewable Resources. The overview of each includes a description of the following: organizational and financial structures, staff demographics and training, services and programs offered, input of non-government organizations, and the primary goals and objectives of each.

The last section analyzes the formal and substantive structures and processes impacting the implementation of the policy. In order to determine

whether the policy has been implemented, a number of key variables are identified and discussed, for the purposes of comparing the two departments later on. These variables include the following:

1. Departmental culture
2. Employment demographics
3. Organizational structures
4. Programs offered/service delivery
5. Departmental responsibilities
6. Nature of relationships with Aboriginal organizations
7. Priorities
8. Substantive and epistemological fit between traditional knowledge and western science which informs the department's work

While the policy provides a broad framework describing the kinds of changes which are encouraged, it does not prescribe a methodology for how the government should get where this policy wants it to go. In this section, difficulties in implementation stemming from the nature of the prescribed changes are discussed.

Chapter Three

Discussion in chapter three focuses on the implementation of the policy in two departments: Health and Social Services, and Renewable Resources. It also investigates the differences in implementation at headquarters versus regional operations.

Discussion in this chapter details the findings of the research with respect to organizational, financial, personnel, and operational variables

outlined above. The findings are examined to determine differences not only between the two departments in terms of implementation, but also the differences between headquarters and regional implementation of the policy within departments. The findings suggest relationships may exist between the traditional knowledge policy's implementation and variables predominant within departments at the regional offices and headquarters.

A general discussion of the findings takes place in the first section, within three categories: patterns found within each departmental headquarters, then regional office, then overall in each department. Some general findings regarding knowledge of the policy and attitudes toward it are determined. These relate to awareness of the policy, issues surrounding strategies for its implementation, compatibility with the philosophies informing decisions shaping program design and delivery, and practicality of its incorporation.

The views of Aboriginal organizations are discussed in this chapter. Many of the organizations view the policy as a positive step but are cynical about its incorporation, based on the GNWT's perceived status as an illegitimate government serving the interests of primarily non-Aboriginal people.

The findings serve to illuminate reasons behind the extent and scope of the policy's application throughout the two departments.

Chapter Four

Chapter four presents conclusions based on a synthesis of the findings detailed in the previous chapter. The first section focuses on the two

departments in question, and assesses the extent to which the policy has been implemented, identifying variables which can be said to generally encourage or obstruct the policy's implementation. The discussion identifies aspects and issues existing within the department's diffracted public administrations, and public administrations in general, that are fundamental to widespread implementation of a traditional knowledge policy. These issues are not purely administrative in nature, but also relate to the positions of power the ruled occupy in relation to decision-making about what kinds of government administration will be put in place.

The second part of the chapter presents conclusions about the meaning of the goals and intent of the policy for the public administration. Given its observed implementation, the policy is more a description of what the NWT government may look like in a post-land claims situation in which all groups have been dealt with fairly and resulting in meaningful political power for First Nations.

Methodology

This investigation is based on both primary and secondary research efforts. Prior to undertaking interviews, a number of organizations were asked to participate. These include the GNWT departments of Health and Social Services and Renewable Resources, Dene Nation, Metis Nation of the NWT, Dene Cultural Institute, Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, Yellowknives Dene Band, Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Inuvik Native Band, Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Inuvialuit Social Development Program, and Inuvik Hunters and Trappers

Association.

The research focuses on the implementation of the Traditional Knowledge Policy in the departments of Renewable Resources and Health and Social Services. These two departments were chosen because both departments deliver programs and services which virtually every resident comes into contact with at some point. The department of Health and Social Services is also a department which is particularly peopled with western trained professionals, and in that respect is an excellent model for looking at issues relating to professional culture within the bureaucracy and professional issues arising when looking at new ways of program and service design and delivery. At the same time, while traditional healing methods exist, very few recognized traditional healers practice in the NWT. This contrasts with the stable core of hunters and trappers using traditional knowledge in virtually every community, which is a valuable source of information for the Department of Renewable Resources. Incorporating traditional knowledge into the Department of Health and Social Services programs involves confronting issues related to western training and professionalization which although apparent in the Department of Renewable Resources, are not nearly as pronounced. Therefore, these two contrasting cases should produce contrasting findings, which would cover or be representative of the diversity of departments within the public administration.

Initial interviews with three members of the original informal TKWG and two key informants they identified took place during November and December 1995. These unstructured interviews used open-ended questions to gather information about the history of the TKWG. These informants

determined the scope and extent of the information provided, which was based on individual recollections and opinions.

Most of the research was subsequently conducted between April 25 and June 01, 1995. Interviews were conducted in Yellowknife April 24 to May 07, and May 22 to June 01. Interviews were conducted in Inuvik May 08 to 21. Of the 37 participants in the research, three were interviewed twice due to time constraints. This resulted in 57 hours of interviews; combined with preliminary research of 10 hours during November and December 1994, interview time totalled 67 hours. The large majority of interviewees requested anonymity as a condition of their participation in this study; therefore, observations and statements are not attributed to specific individuals.

Permission was received from Joe Handley, Deputy Minister of Renewable Resources, and Ken Lovely, Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services, to conduct interviews with their officials. Aboriginal organizations and First Nations also agreed to participate. These included the Dene Nation, Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, T'loondih Healing Camp, and Dene Cultural Institute.

While the Inuvialuit Social Development Program, Inuvialuit Community Corporation, Metis Nation of the NWT, and Yellowknives Dene Band agreed to participate in the research, officials were unavailable for interviews when the research was conducted. Officials from the Inuvialuit organizations were either away from the office or had taken advantage of an early spring melt to go out on the land. The Yellowknives Dene Band provided information about its traditional knowledge policy, which has been taken into consideration in this investigation.

Interviews were loosely structured around a set of questions focusing on aspects of GNWT Departments expected to influence the extent of the use of traditional knowledge, including: departmental cultures, number of Aboriginal employees, positions of Aboriginal versus non-Aboriginal employees in the organization, organizational structures, types of programs and services offered, departmental objectives, departmental responsibilities, departmental relations with Aboriginal organizations, and the substantive and epistemological fit between traditional knowledge and western science that informs the department's work. Interview questions are listed in full in Appendix A.

Thirty-five informants participated in interviews which ranged from one to four hours in length; an average interview lasted two hours. Nine representatives of Aboriginal and First Nations organizations, 17 officials from the recently amalgamated Department of Health and Social Services, and nine representatives from the Department of Renewable Resources participated. Percentage of Aboriginal, long-term and short-term resident non-Aboriginal people, and sample sizes for each of the organizations are listed in tables 1 and 1-1 below. Informants were chosen by organizations or agreed to participate after being identified as key informants by knowledgeable individuals. Selection of informants was done in this way as it was critical to this study to access the small pool of individuals involved in traditional knowledge issues during the years leading up to the traditional knowledge policy's establishment. Individuals with experience in and working knowledge of the topic provided important background and historical information.

TABLE 1

RESEARCH INTERVIEWS -- SAMPLE SIZES BY ORGANIZATION

Organization	Number of participants organization
Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute	2
Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board	2
T'loondih Healing Camp	1
Dene Nation	2
Dene Cultural Institute	2**
GNWT Health and Social Services - Headquarters	6
Inuvik Regional Health Board	11
GNWT Renewable Resources - Headquarters	5
Department of Renewable Resources	4

Notes: * full time permanent employees; ** one of the employees was interviewed for two hours during November 1995.

TABLE 1-1

DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF INFORMANTS BY ORGANIZATION CATEGORY

Organization Type	Aboriginal	Long-term Non-Aboriginal Resident*	Short-term Non-Aboriginal Resident**
Aboriginal	2	3	4
Renewable Resources	2	7	0
Health and Social Services	5	7	5
Total	9	17	9

Notes: * Long-term resident is defined as having lived in the North for 10 years or more; ** Short-term resident is defined as having lived in the North

for less than 10 years

Of the Aboriginal informants, all are Dene or Metis with the exception of one Inuvialuit individual. Given that Inuvialuit organizations were unable to participate, the investigation's applicability is narrowed to largely Dene, Metis, and non-Aboriginal perceptions. Overall, the percentage of Aboriginal people interviewed for this research is 26%, and non-Aboriginal 74%.

Some of the observations made in this study are drawn from my own personal experience, having lived in Inuvik and Yellowknife for 15 years, and working in territorial government departments and with government officials.

Chapter One

I. Introduction

Public awareness of current and potential uses of Aboriginal traditional knowledge in the Northwest Territories (NWT) has increased during the past decade. Between 1989 and 1993, a process unfolded facilitating the incorporation of traditional knowledge into the NWT public government's programs and services. This process involved the convening of a working group, charged with recommending direction to the GNWT regarding traditional knowledge use. As a result, the GNWT created a traditional knowledge policy, aimed at promoting traditional knowledge use both within and outside of government.

Until the early 1990s, no formal policy ensured that Aboriginal traditional knowledge was integrated into public government institutions. As a result, traditional knowledge was rarely used in government, or used on an ad hoc basis only.

The history of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group (TKWG) began during the fall of 1985. Initially, it was an informal group of interested individuals who would meet regularly to discuss traditional knowledge. During October 1989, it became a formal partnership. Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and non-government organization (NGO) representatives received government funding to uncover current and potential uses of traditional knowledge in the NWT. The work resulted in the Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group during July 1991.

The GNWT Response to the Report took two years to complete. The

process included consultation with all government departments and with Aboriginal elders of the TKWG. The Response contains a Traditional Knowledge Policy, outlining the GNWT commitment to using traditional knowledge in its programs and services.

First Nations have long been in favour of the GNWT functioning in a manner responsive to and reflective of the NWT's Aboriginal majority. Upon review of the GNWT Response to the Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group, one elder commented that "traditional knowledge will really only be applied when native people take back responsibilities appropriated by non-native governments."[1] This comment states simply and eloquently the important link between traditional knowledge and issues of increased community control and self-government in the wider context of constitutional development.

Public Government and Aboriginal People: An Historical Legacy

The arrival of Europeans in North America marked the beginning of fundamental change in the lives of Aboriginal people. Traditional Aboriginal societies and cultures were subjected to assimilationist policies and institutions of the alien non-Aboriginal populations. The growth of government in the Northwest Territories over the last 100 years can be described as a process of evolution from minimalist to colonialist, and since the late 1970s, representative and responsible. This process paralleled the attempted assimilation, then self organization and increasing political power of First Nations.

The constitutional basis for the public government of the Northwest Territories is founded on two federal statutes: the Indian Act (R.S.C. 1985, c. I-

5) and the Northwest Territories Act (R.S.C. 1985, c. N-27). In 1905, amendments to the Northwest Territories Act established a Commissioner as the Territories' chief executive officer, and a Council of four persons charged with assisting the commissioner. The Northwest Territories Act established executive and legislative authority relating to matters of a primarily local nature, such as roads, police, public health, licensing, and protection of game.[2] The Department of Indian Affairs, under the Indian Act, was responsible for all Aboriginal residents of the NWT.

Between 1905 and 1920, government in the Northwest Territories was minimal.[3] During this time, the successful drilling of an oil well approximately 80 km North of Fort Norman was undertaken. This prompted the Department of the Interior, the NWT's administrative authority, to initiate governing mechanisms to maintain order.[4]

In April 1921, an Order in Council decreed that the number of members of the Territorial Council should be expanded to six, and that a deputy commissioner should be designated. From the time of its establishment until 1950, the council met in Ottawa, pursuing an agenda shaped by concerns for the development of the region's non-renewable resources.[5] Concurrent federal government policy was aimed at maintenance of Aboriginal people's traditional lifestyles.

After 1950, the Council adopted policies ostensibly designed to promote Aboriginal participation in the Northern wage economy. However, these policies lacked cultural sensitivity toward the Aboriginal constituency.[6] Despite pursuing policy aims focused on promoting self reliance, the GNWT remained in the control of Ottawa, primarily concerned with serving interests outside of the NWT.

In 1967, the seat of government was relocated to the NWT. The federal government decided unilaterally that Yellowknife would be the new capital. The purpose was to replace the distant, alien, and unresponsive Ottawa regime with a government close and responsive to the people it served. Subsequently, the Ottawa administration relocated to Yellowknife with their families in 1967.

This began the evolution of the territorial government into an autonomous unit. By the late 1970s, a system of responsible government had developed. Many of the powers and responsibilities enjoyed by provincial governments had been devolved to the GNWT.

During this time, Dene, Inuit, Inuvialuit, and Metis became increasingly politicized, establishing themselves as important political actors in the North. For many Aboriginal people, the Government of the Northwest Territories was as unresponsive and alien as the previous federal administration. The Berger Commission's informal community hearings during the 1970s gave people a forum to express not only concerns about the effects of development of the land, but also the chance to promote better understanding of their cultural identity as Aboriginal people, and the effects of government policy on their lives.[7] The event was also a catalyst for the self-organization of Aboriginal groups.

Under the circumstances, Canada was compelled to seriously evaluate and attend to its responsibilities relating to Aboriginal land claims in the Northwest Territories. Resource development had the potential to significantly damage the ability of Aboriginal people to pursue land-based subsistence activities, with no promise of monetary or economic benefits as compensation. Through negotiation with the federal government,

Aboriginal organizations sought to solidify their claims to certain areas of land. They also sought redress for the myriad of socio-economic problems which had accompanied the non-Aboriginal presence in the North.

During pursuit of negotiation and subsequent implementation of land claims, communities were and still are a central focus.[8] The role of traditional knowledge in negotiations is extremely important. It forms the basis for distinctly Aboriginal lifestyles which shape all aspects of culture. For example, documentation of traditional knowledge and land usage is extremely important for land selection purposes, such as identifying heritage sites, animal migration patterns, and traditional hunting and trapping trails.

Since the 1970s, Aboriginal organizations have made clear that governance at the local and regional levels is of essential importance. First Nations must have control of their own destinies through governing themselves, their lands, and resources. For many, the wealth of existing traditional Aboriginal knowledge indicates that communities shouldered responsibility for themselves in many areas more than adequately in times prior to contact. That control was subsequently eroded by the alien government system, control which communities wish to regain. The process of devolution of powers from the federal to the territorial government is important to fulfilling aspirations of local control in a number of program and service areas. The land claims and devolution processes have been linked by negotiation between the territorial government and Aboriginal organizations. Therefore,

> through the linked processes of devolution and land claims negotiations, the roles of Native communities in policy-making, planning and management, particularly for resources, environment

and social programs, have grown in significance.[9]

Devolution from the territorial to the community level has been more difficult. The processes of implementing claims agreements have brought the most significant political and control related changes in communities.

Land claims processes provided a point around which Aboriginal groups could organize themselves, it also in part offered a rationale for division. The settlement of the Nunavut land claim and the division of the NWT in 1999 have created unique political circumstances for the western territory. The power of communities in determining their roles and the role of a territorial government during the negotiation of a constitution for the western territory have increased significantly. For Aboriginal groups, traditional knowledge has an important role in the political process in that it can be used as a basis for constitutional development. These negotiations may well result in the establishment of government embracing Aboriginal as opposed to non-Aboriginal culture and peoples, which is precisely the case for the new government of Nunavut.[10]

Traditional Knowledge and Western Science

Traditional Knowledge

One of the first tasks of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group was to reach consensus on a working definition of traditional knowledge. Inherent in this kind of knowledge are the values and belief systems of its holders. Like western knowledge systems, the Aboriginal world view and way of life form the foundation of Aboriginal systems of knowledge. Characteristics of this world view demonstrate pronounced differences from a western European world view; for example, Aboriginal peoples' relationship

with the land, which includes spiritual dimensions and unique methods of observation and communicating information. According to the TKWG:

> Traditional knowledge is knowledge that derives from, or is rooted in the traditional way of life of Aboriginal people. Traditional knowledge is the accumulated knowledge and understanding of the human place in relation to the universe. This encompasses spiritual relationships, relationships with the natural environment and the use of natural resources, relationships between people, and is reflected in language, social organization, values, institutions, and laws.[11]

Constructing a working definition of traditional knowledge was a source of extensive discussion and frustration among the group. For Aboriginal people, knowledge is not just information. In the opinion of one elder, it is "a common understanding of what life is about."[12] Traditional knowledge is the result of thousands of years of Northern land-based life experience. As with knowledge systems around the world, values are also woven into this knowledge system.

For thousands of years, the survival of the Aboriginal people in the area known as the NWT depended solely on their own knowledge, culture, and social organization. Traditional knowledge is the legacy of the observation and experience of many generations of Aboriginal communities, ensuring the survival of traditional ways among future generations.

The arrival of Europeans saw the decline of societal autonomy; Aboriginal peoples' control of their own lives and the resources upon which they depended were replaced with control by government and religious institutions, and profit-oriented resource exploitation. Institutions founded on non-Aboriginal knowledge, values, and belief systems pervaded all aspects of Aboriginal life. These institutions fundamentally altered and affected the cultures of Aboriginal peoples.

A fundamental issue shaping the relationship between the holders of

Aboriginal traditional knowledge and the holders of western scientific knowledge involves unequal "sources and resources of power".[13] Ellen Bielawski argues that scientists operate within the context of a

> ....northern society composed of two groups with different interests and different cultures, engaged in dominant-subordinate cross-cultural interaction.[14]

From an Aboriginal perspective, non-Aboriginal authorities and institutions have long been imposed and are often culturally irrelevant. This results in conflict between the two cultural groups, and poses a continual threat to the development of Aboriginal cultures. Typically, conflicts manifest as development and use of natural resources by non-Aboriginal authorities in areas of traditional Aboriginal land use.

Recognition of the value and usefulness of traditional knowledge on a wide scale in the context of undertaking western science-based management practices is necessary to establish a sound basis for cooperation between western scientists and holders of traditional knowledge.[15]

Resisting use of traditional knowledge with scientific systems of management and efficiency centered approaches to policy-making, planning, and implementation prevents consideration of different ways of doing things, and achieving methods more familiar to Aboriginal northerners. The accuracy of traditional knowledge in the resource fields has been recognized by many scientists working in the North.[16] Until a short time ago, many professionals and western scientists resisted cooperation with local indigenous peoples in decision-making matters considered largely the realm of "qualified" professionals.[17] The professional culture which accords status based almost solely on academic qualifications earned through western

scientific training methods and academic experience widens the cultural gap between the almost exclusively non-Aboriginal scientists and Aboriginal people. Scientists working in the North may be unaware of practical concerns of the communities that their presence or work may affect. Often their work serves the interests of southern society, and their primary concerns relate to the efficiency and freedom with which their own research may be carried out.[18] Perhaps most importantly, recognition of the utility of traditional knowledge alongside western science gives appropriate recognition to Aboriginal cultural values and traditions which served Aboriginal people so well for so long before the arrival of any outsiders.

Despite the importance of traditional knowledge, the nature of modern public government reflects the values and beliefs of non-Aboriginal culture. As Harvey Feit has stated:

> Into this circumpolar setting of expanding national or international development of land and resources, and of local resistance, the national governments have increasingly inserted environmental scientists, planners, and wildlife managers...government mandated wildlife research and management is often seen as part of a process of intrusion, enhancing centralization of control rather than contributing to local autonomy and self-governance.[19]

Increasingly, Aboriginal people have become acutely aware of the importance of linking traditional knowledge with scientific research which forms the basis of institutions and processes dominant in the NWT. Communities seek culturally appropriate systems to address their needs in areas ranging from health care to resource management. Traditional knowledge forms the foundation of Aboriginal culture, upon which political, economic, and personal aspirations depend. The social provisions of land claims agreements, continual agitation for self-determination, and frustration

resulting from the continued inability of "southern" models to resolve social, economic, and political problems illustrate that traditional knowledge is of primary concern to First Nations. [20]

Barriers to Traditional Knowledge Use

Western scientific institutional regimes often have difficulty accommodating the goals, priorities, and assumptions of Aboriginal people. Barriers to the use of traditional knowledge are numerous. John Sallenave outlines three such barriers to the use of traditional ecological knowledge in environmental impact assessments, namely: perception, skepticism, and political considerations.[21] This classification also applies to the lack of use and integration of traditional knowledge on a far wider scale. The differences in values, belief systems, and ways of knowing between western scientists and Aboriginal people naturally results in differences of perceptions regarding issues and impacts of significance in a wide variety of areas. These range from wildlife management regimes to the structure of the justice system. Employing the two knowledge systems in isolation exacerbates conflicts arising from differences in perception.

As a result of basic differences between western scientists and traditional knowledge holders, each tend to be skeptical of the other's knowledge system. This may be compounded by not having the opportunity to know each other. Since the power to determine the scope and methods of research lies largely with western scientists, their skepticism is a significant barrier to the inclusion of traditional knowledge. However, the implementation of land claims processes has demonstrated that traditional knowledge is being widely used for management purposes and baseline

information in areas falling under Aboriginal authority. Also, the conduct of research on settlement lands has seen the introduction of research screening and approval processes incorporating extensive community involvement.[22]

There is resistance to linking traditional knowledge with western science in government at a political and bureaucratic level. Using traditional knowledge in the programs and services of a public government would require significant alteration to decision making, policies, and structures currently in use. It would require increased awareness of Aboriginal culture among actors at all levels of government. To be achieved this would require dedication of resources and a fundamental shift in power from the GNWT to communities, which are best equipped to determine the areas and extent of usage. Holders of Aboriginal traditional knowledge would have a fundamentally important role to play in effecting such changes. The current lack of use of traditional knowledge renders them insignificant to decision-making. In addition to the bureaucratic problems is the likelihood that such shifts would not necessarily guarantee that the large non-Aboriginal minority would be amenable to traditional knowledge use.

The Traditional Knowledge Working Group

In 1985, an ad hoc Working Group on traditional knowledge organized a forum for discussion among several like-minded individuals. Based in Yellowknife, members had a personal commitment to traditional knowledge. These individuals also had close ties to organizations interested in traditional knowledge. As a whole, members sought to create circumstances whereby traditional knowledge would gain a wider acceptance and understanding among the NWT population. Regular participants included Bob Janes,

Director of the NWT Science Institute; Debbie DeLancey, a consultant with Fee Yee consulting; Joanne Barnaby, Executive Director of the newly formed Dene Cultural Institute; Allice Legat, Chairperson of the Northern Heritage Society; Lori Nowakowski, of the Science Institute; and Helena Laraque, employed by the GNWT Department of Renewable Resources.

The group's activities represented a modest beginning toward changing people's attitudes, facilitated by a free flow of ideas and increasing awareness of traditional knowledge. Early meetings took place semi-regularly in informal lunch-hour settings. Discussion ranged widely over relevant topics, prompted by the interests of those present. Often discussions would be initiated by a presentation of a particular topic given by one of the members. The group sponsored a workshop on the uses of traditional knowledge in programs for Department of Renewable Resources staff, given by academics working in the field.

One of the main goals of this group was to create a greater understanding and awareness of traditional knowledge. Lack of substantive knowledge on a general level was perceived to be the main reason for resistance to its use. The education of individuals held the possibility of creating a ripple effect, helping remove the main barrier to its use. To facilitate public education, members actively sought formalization of the group under the auspices of the GNWT. Group members believed wide-scale support was essential to removing existing barriers to the recognition and use of traditional knowledge. Co-opting the government was fundamental to ensuring an education process which would benefit from government resources.

The ad hoc Working Group explored an area of knowledge which had

until that point received little attention from government and non-Aboriginal society. Increasing general awareness of traditional knowledge had the potential to translate into wide-ranging implications for Aboriginal culture and models of northern government. Aboriginal organizations involved in the group identified the links between the activities and goals of the ad hoc group and the importance of traditional knowledge for providing the basis for community development and future change.[23]

GNWT institutions and structures are based on predominantly western scientific methods and systems of knowledge. Bureaucratic and institutional barriers and resistance to the recognition of traditional knowledge are rooted in a long history of colonialist attitudes reinforcing preferences for non-Aboriginal based governance.[24]

In 1985, most members of the NWT Legislative Assembly were Aboriginal, including members of Cabinet. Many Aboriginal politicians at the time did not possess in-depth knowledge of the issues surrounding traditional knowledge. Many of these politicians were also part of a generation of Aboriginal people shaped by assimilationist and religious institutions. Given the circumstances shaping leaders' lives, it is not surprising that they were perceived to lack confidence in and understanding of themselves, their own knowledge and their own people.[25] They were perceived as unable to influence the largely non-Aboriginal bureaucracy. The bureaucracy was seen to be unaware of and unsympathetic to Aboriginal culture. As a result of this combination of factors, traditional knowledge was not a political priority for successive governments during the 1980's.

Ignorance of traditional knowledge was prevalent throughout the NWT. The link between cultural and political development and traditional

knowledge was not obvious for many people inside and outside of government. As a result, no common vocabulary had developed to bridge the cultural gap between the bureaucracy and the communities which could promote general understanding of the place of traditional knowledge in the lives of the NWT Aboriginal majority.

Iqaluit MLA Dennis Patterson won the post of Government Leader in the 1988 territorial election. Titus Alooloo, MLA from Amittuq, assumed the post of Minister for the Departments of Renewable Resources and Culture and Communications. During 1988 the ad hoc group sent a letter to the Government Leader requesting the government's cooperation in the working group. Both of these politicians were supportive of the TKWG, and key players in securing the GNWT's commitment to working toward a traditional knowledge policy.

In 1988, Allice Legat assumed the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of the Department of Culture and Communications. Debbie DeLancey, formerly of Fee Yee Consulting, assumed a position as Policy Advisor in the Policy and Planning Section in the Department of the Executive. In addition to Bob Janes, the Director of the Science Institute of the Northwest Territories, these TKWG members occupied positions of strategic significance within the government. However, it also meant Ms. DeLancey and Ms. Legat were unable to continue their formal participation in the work of the TKWG.

In 1988 the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Commission for the United Nations' Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) took place in Yellowknife. At this meeting, Dennis Patterson, then the Government Leader, stated that there existed a

> wide spectrum of areas where traditional knowledge may have an influence on government policy and programs.[26]

The GNWT's public commitment to promoting awareness and understanding of traditional knowledge was critical for the establishment of a formal working group. Its involvement would dramatically increase the profile of the issues surrounding traditional knowledge use. It also held the potential for the use and recognition of traditional knowledge by the GNWT on a large scale.

After requesting government involvement in and support for their activities, the Traditional Knowledge Working Group was formalized in October 1989. Despite the fact that committed individuals from the original ad hoc group were well-placed within government, and the fact that the Government Leader indicated enthusiasm for the project, the Government of the Northwest Territories contributed only $14,000 to the working group's budget. To TKWG members, it was clear that the resources dedicated to the project reflected its low priority.

Ministers for eight government departments appointed representatives to the group: Renewable Resources, Health and Social Services, Education, Economic Development and Tourism, Justice, Culture and Communications, and Aboriginal Rights and Constitutional Development. Non-government organizations participating in the group included representatives from the Dene and Inuit Cultural Institutes, the Inuvialuit Social Development Program, the Dene/Metis Negotiations Secretariat, the Northern Heritage Society, the Metis Heritage Society, Arctic College, and the Science Institute of the NWT. Some individuals from the original working group also continued their participation. While the formalization of the group was a welcome

event, it also led to new problems relating to the accommodation of a new range of competing interests.

As the primary holders of traditional knowledge, elders played an important role during the group's discussions, and also in reviewing the GNWT's Draft Response to the TKWG Report.

During 1989 and 1990, a number of elders from throughout the Northwest Territories were brought together as part of the TKWG. Aboriginal cultural organizations approached elders for their assistance. In keeping with traditional criteria of selection, elders spent time talking in their communities about the task at hand. They decided who would be best suited to participating in the TKWG. Inuit, Inuvialuit, and Dene elders were represented in the group. Although the participation of Metis elders was solicited, they did not participate in the working group.[27]

Together, representatives determined the form and structure of the newly formed Traditional Knowledge Working Group. The objectives of the group were:

> to seek ways in which the GNWT and non-government organizations could work together to document traditional knowledge and ensure that it is applied both by government and other agencies.[28]

The formal terms of reference of the TKWG set out a number of difficult tasks for its participants. These tasks meant exploring issues fundamental to understanding the nature of traditional knowledge and the possibilities for its application. Participants were charged with reaching a working definition of traditional knowledge, to assess and report on the use and recognition of traditional knowledge by both government and non-government organizations, to identify areas of potential use and to identify obstacles to its

potential use in organizations, and to propose solutions for the removal of these obstacles. As well, the group was also asked to propose ways in which information and resource sharing among government and non-government agencies might be improved, evaluate mechanisms for recognizing traditional knowledge and how it might be put in place, and to recommend a mechanism for "carrying the work forward" once the task of the TKWG was complete. [29]

The terms of reference for the working group were set unilaterally by the GNWT. NGO representatives attempted to have changes made to these terms of reference, but to no avail. They felt that as representatives of Aboriginal groups and interests, they were better able to identify issues and areas circumscribing the work of the group. Their participation in setting the terms of reference would also lend greater legitimacy to the work being undertaken by the group and the nature of the partnership the group represented. For example, under the terms of reference a number of objectives were set, most of which directed the group to identify specific areas or actions to promote traditional knowledge use. But discussions of the elders brought together to advise the group focused on the necessity for traditional knowledge to be used as a basis for constitutional development. They believed efforts should not be towards serving short-term goals, but rather toward the fundamental changes in the structure of government, decision-making, and the collective values upon which government decision-making is based.[30] Although unhappiness over the terms of reference was shared by these groups, agreement in regard to change could not be reached. After debating the issue amongst themselves, NGO representatives decided that under the set terms of reference, potential for

change existed. The opportunity could not be missed.

The formalization of the ad hoc group represented a unique cooperative effort between government and non-government players. Notwithstanding the determination of the terms of reference, at the time it was virtually unheard of for NGOs to participate on an otherwise equal footing with government representatives within a policy advisory group.

Not all GNWT departments and representatives were enthusiastic about the implications of this unique situation, or the work being undertaken by the group. The original ad hoc group had emerged out of members' personal commitment to fostering public awareness of traditional knowledge. Members of the formalized group did not necessarily share this same high level of commitment. Many members of the formal group were perceived as Non-Aboriginals who may or may not have had cross-cultural training. Their willingness and ability to understand and appreciate the issues and subtle details of the subject matter were sometimes hampered by lack of knowledge of Aboriginal people's cultures, languages, values, and systems of knowledge.[31] Several representatives lacked authority to give departmental commitments, often hampering the group's discussions.

For some original members of the working group the process proved unduly lengthy and at times, frustrating.[32] The main difference after the formalization took place was the transition from a creative, informal group of individuals "of like minds" to a highly bureaucratized process circumscribed by terms of reference and competing interests.

Ignorance of the subject matter among participants, combined with the participation of government representatives lacking authority to make firm commitments, and seeming resistance to reach consensus caused frustration

among members. Representatives were sometimes pressured by superiors to take certain positions outside of discussion taking place amongst the group. Often hard-won progress would be achieved after a series of meetings, only to be undone due to the shifting interests and resources of organizations taking part.

Competing Interests

The combination of ignorance regarding traditional knowledge, bureaucratic resistance to change, and the various interests of the departments and non-government organizations involved slowed the progress of the TKWG. Aboriginal organizations representing Dene and Inuvialuit viewed traditional knowledge as a basis for constitutional development. Its use in government programs and services could assist in a process of fundamental alteration of government structure and decision-making appropriate to Aboriginal cultures.

This view differed from expectations of government departments which expected changes of lesser impact. They were not keen to initiate changes which might decrease bureaucratic power, or complicate current organizational structures. Departments viewed logistics and costs of implementation of change as a drain on carefully allocated resources. Incorporation of traditional knowledge could also become a source of controversy if it was not received well by the public.

The TKWG had to synthesize competing interests in drafting their report. Also, the use of traditional knowledge up to that point had been confined almost exclusively to areas related to resource management. Without models or examples of traditional knowledge use in government

programs and services outside of resource management, participants had no frame of reference for the possibilities of its use.

The recommendations made by the TKWG were approved by its members after long hours of debate. The interests outlined determined the extent and scope of the recommendations and their emphasis in the final report. One such debate took place over the role of the Territorial Elder's Councils. As holders of traditional knowledge, the advice and guidance of elders is fundamental to the judicious use of traditional knowledge in government institutions. The Denendeh Elders Council was used as an example for such a body. However, government was not willing to commit the resources for a council, arguing that MLAs already consult with elders in their constituencies. Organizations such as the Dene Cultural Institute saw a territorial elders council as fundamental to traditional knowledge use in government. As traditional knowledge experts, a formalized forum for eliciting their advice on a range of issues was absolutely necessary.

The definition of traditional knowledge was also revisited. Aboriginal representatives favored a broad definition based on Aboriginal cultural practices, spiritual beliefs, and way of life. Government representatives advocated a definition which was inclusive of the large non-Aboriginal minority, which stripped it of important cultural aspects. Other members favored an "academic" definition. They argued that traditional knowledge is knowledge which is found to be true outside of its cultural context; they saw this as appropriate for a public government.

Members were divided over fundamental questions. These related to the feasibility and wisdom of government introducing a policy non-specific to individual Aboriginal cultures. Given the vast differences between the

traditional knowledge of differing communities, the possibility of one coherent policy satisfying everyone seemed remote.

The Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group

The Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group includes 20 recommendations for action. These recommendations are wide ranging in scope, aimed at promoting traditional knowledge use in government and non-government organizations. The necessity for the report and its accompanying recommendations was derived in part from the fact that traditional knowledge, intimately linked with Aboriginal peoples' sense of self-identity as the basis of Aboriginal culture, was necessary for inclusion in government institutions in order to ensure government's evolution in a culturally relevant manner.

The group was required to achieve a number of objectives:

1) reaching a working definition of traditional knowledge,

2) assessing and reporting on current and potential uses of traditional knowledge in government,

3) assessing obstacles to increasing influence and application of traditional knowledge,

4) proposing ways of removing obstacles and promoting use of traditional knowledge, and,

5) determining evaluation and implementation mechanisms for traditional knowledge use.

Qualifying statements appear throughout the report, relating to insufficient time, resources, and understanding necessary to undertake required tasks. For example, although charged to ascertain current uses of

traditional knowledge in government and non-government organizations, the report states that

> Efforts to determine in a comprehensive manner the current use of traditional knowledge were hampered by the lack of time available to the committee to do the necessary research, and a lack of common understanding about traditional knowledge, how it is transmitted, its role in Northern society, or appropriate ways to integrate it. [33]

In fact, only a few pages of the Report are devoted to what is arguably a fundamental aspect of the undertaking. The report lists two government agencies, three departments, and one non-government agency known to be "attempting to use" traditional knowledge. The same fate befell the separate but equally important task of identifying areas of potential use of traditional knowledge. Throughout the report, no solid documentation forms the basis for statements such as:

> The attempts to date to use traditional knowledge have not yet met the aspirations of Aboriginal peoples...,[34] and

> The integration of traditional knowledge into Northern society currently relies on individual initiative, abilities and priorities, or the strength of community pressure.[35]

The TKWG recognized the lack of resources as a serious obstacle to producing the report. Expenses for bringing elders together to discuss issues were met by contributions from NGOs. This situation had reduced the scope and extent of the TKWG's mandate, and prevented it from fulfilling its terms of reference and building a well-researched and documented foundation upon which convincing arguments could be built. In recognition of the consequence of such resource constraints, one of the recommendations of the TKWG is for the government to sponsor an independent evaluation of current and potential uses of traditional knowledge within the NWT.

The report identifies "principles for the preservation and use of traditional knowledge". These principles underscore the importance and necessity of the incorporation of traditional knowledge into institutions, decisions, and programs and services. The principles advocate Aboriginal and local control of traditional knowledge use, the importance of traditional methods in the preservation and presentation of traditional knowledge, and the importance of support of these efforts.

Numerous obstacles to the use of traditional knowledge are outlined in the Report. These include a lack of formal avenues of reception at the political and bureaucratic levels, a lack of research and documentation of traditional knowledge, and a lack of access to existing research. Widespread ignorance about traditional knowledge and its uses and benefits is perceived to be perpetuated by the lack of support for the increased use and awareness of traditional knowledge.

The recommendations are wide ranging in scope. They relate to policy content and formation, logistical policy implementation measures, decision methods, processes for and models of culturally appropriate governance, interactions between government and non-government agencies, and even federal taxation policy. Some significant recommendations include: the establishment of an NWT Elders Council; designation of traditional knowledge coordinators in all government departments; a public awareness campaign and the development of school curriculum about traditional knowledge; the development and delivery of a traditional knowledge awareness training program for all GNWT staff; use of the NWT Science Institute as the main agency for information about traditional knowledge research and the promotion of traditional knowledge use in research, as well

as responsibility for the development of a traditional knowledge research and use protocol; increased funding for traditional knowledge research and dissemination; measures to accommodate GNWT employee's pursuit of traditional lifestyles; the establishment of permanent positions in the government to promote traditional knowledge use; and to undertake a study of the use and potential uses of traditional knowledge in the NWT. Although criticism has been leveled at the TKWG for overstepping its mandate, members of the group believe that in many respects they did not go far enough.[36]

One difficulty facing the TKWG was suggesting ways to ensure traditional knowledge use in decisions, programs and services of government. As indicated by the definition established by the group, traditional knowledge is not only specific to each distinct cultural group, but also differs in each area groups inhabit. The level of usage, potential areas of usage, and methods of linkage with western institutions would have to be determined by local people. Ethical, moral, procedural and cultural concerns easily arise out of discussion surrounding the institutionalization of traditional knowledge. The Report indicates that such debates and decisions must take place primarily among the people immediately affected by the use of traditional knowledge.

The Response of the Government of the Northwest Territories to the Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group

The GNWT tabled its Response to the Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group during October 1993. It stated that the TKWG's findings would form "a starting point for a plan of action designed to

encourage and promote traditional knowledge."[37]

The length of time taken by the GNWT to provide a response to the Report of the TKWG was a source of frustration for original TKWG members. In May of 1992, the Dene Cultural Institute (DCI) circulated a letter to all MLAs expressing concern over what was perceived as unnecessary delay. In addition, two government documents, Reshaping Northern Government and Strength at Two Levels were tabled while the Report of the TKWG was only under consideration; these reports described the imminence of fundamental restructuring in the GNWT.

The Dene Cultural Institute's letter urged MLAs to further the success of the TKWG's recommendations by ensuring the statements in the reports supporting community involvement and culturally relevant forms of government would not be reduced to rhetoric. Although the two reports contained ideas consistent with the recommendation of the Report of the TKWG, the letter encouraged MLAs to promote the necessity for a comprehensive, well-considered approach to the use of traditional knowledge as opposed to a fragmented, ad hoc approach.[38]

In May of 1992, the Minister of Culture and Communications undertook to bring to Cabinet an outline of the GNWT response the Report of the TKWG. By the end of June, the Minister, reporting on the status of the outline, could only say that it was "on the move."[39] The issue was raised again as Deh Cho MLA Sam Gargan voiced the frustration articulated by Aboriginal cultural organizations over the government's delay:

> ...the Minister has received written concerns from myself and from the Dene Cultural Institute and the Inuit Cultural Institute about the lack of a formal response. Members of the Metis Heritage Association and the Inuvialuit Social Development Program also feel that this is taking

> too long ... the department [of Culture and Communications] is doing a little here and a little there for Aboriginal language and culture. But it seems to be ad hoc, with no comprehensive plan or strategy. The government needs to develop a strategy, and there must be greater community control in this area.[40]

The length of time taken to table a government response increased pressure on the government, and particularly the Government Leader, to produce a meaningful and comprehensive strategy.

In developing the GNWT position, a process of Departmental consultation was initiated in September of 1992. To combat criticisms over lengthy delay in responding, and other concerns, the Government Leader promised the elders of the working group they would have an opportunity to review and suggest necessary changes to the draft response.

The GNWT Response addresses seven issue areas. These include the creation of a traditional knowledge policy, assignment of the mandate for traditional knowledge initiatives and its prioritization, the creation of an interdepartmental working group, the reallocation of grants and contributions, the establishment of traditional knowledge awards, public awareness initiatives, and the development of cross cultural training programs.

The policy has three parts. First, it recognizes that Aboriginal peoples of the NWT have acquired traditional knowledge over generations through living in close harmony with the land. The second part recognizes this as a valid and essential source of information about the land, resources, and peoples' relationship to it and each other. The third part pledges to incorporate traditional knowledge into government decisions and actions where appropriate.

The policy's provisions give a sense of how the policy will be implemented. The provisions stipulate that consideration of traditional knowledge use in government falls under the authority of the ministers, and specifically directs the Department of Renewable Resources to use traditional knowledge in its work, and to coordinate government-wide traditional knowledge use. In each department, traditional knowledge coordinator positions are established to facilitate traditional knowledge awareness and utilization throughout government. The former Science Institute (now Aurora Research Institute) is also identified as the agency responsible for keeping track of and promoting traditional knowledge research in the NWT.

The Response focuses on promotion and encouragement of the awareness and use of traditional knowledge in government, with an emphasis on its use in Northern resource management. Responses to each individual recommendation appeared to be amenable to the suggestions of the TKWG Report. However, vaguely worded text, lack of mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the commitments undertaken, and lack of an implementation plan betrayed significant reticence on the part of the GNWT to commit to specific initiatives.

On page 14 of the Response, the GNWT provides an interpretation of traditional knowledge which contrasts sharply with the definition on which the Report of the TKWG is based. The GNWT defines traditional knowledge as

> Knowledge and values which have been acquired through experience, observation, from the land or from spiritual teachings, and handed down from one generation to another.[41]

Arguably, such a definition is appropriate for a public government serving the interests of all of its citizens, but it remains a vague definition which is

not specific to Aboriginal people. However, throughout the Response the government implicitly recognizes the fact that its services and programs are lacking cultural relevance for the majority of its population. In the preface to the policy, and in the content of the response, the GNWT frames discussion of traditional knowledge as it relates to Aboriginal people specifically:

> The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes that the Aboriginal peoples of the NWT have acquired a vast store of knowledge through their experience of centuries of living in close harmony with the land. The government recognizes that aboriginal traditional knowledge is a valid and essential source of information...and will incorporate traditional knowledge into Government decisions and actions where appropriate.[42]

Moreover, the first principle stated as a basis for the Traditional Knowledge Policy states:

> The primary responsibility for the preservation and promotion of traditional knowledge lies with Aboriginal people.[43]

Despite the tone and content of the document which clearly is written specifically with Aboriginal traditional knowledge in mind, the GNWT definition is culturally neutral. The implications of this fact are far reaching. Although it may be argued that a public government has a responsibility to serve the interests of all constituents, the work of the group was from the beginning clearly meant to address the fact that Aboriginal people's traditional knowledge was not being used in the public government institutions of the NWT.

Review of the Response: Elders and Working Group Members

During 1992, the Government Leader promised to allow the elders of the TKWG to review the draft response prior to its tabling in the Legislative

Assembly. A meeting was held in Fort Providence October 12 to 14, 1993 for this purpose.

The elders' comments indicate their enthusiasm and interest in the notion of shaping government programs and services in culturally relevant and appropriate ways. Their ideas related to programs in all government departments, including health, justice, education, and renewable resources, emphasizing the need for local control over program areas. After reviewing the Response they stated that

> [the] government needs to state clearly where it stands with respect to traditional knowledge. [The government] seems to agree with some parts [of the Report] , but not with others.[44]

This criticism was much milder than those of Aboriginal organizations. The Dene Cultural Institute expressed its concern that the government, in its view, chose

> to ignore, the vast majority of the recommendations stemming from these fora [the Traditional Knowledge Working Group and the Elders' Gathering]...our analysis...indicates a major gulf between the recommendations of the Elders and the Government's final response.[45]

The assignment of lead responsibility to the Department of Renewable Resources reinforced perceptions that traditional knowledge encompasses only traditional environmental knowledge, and could serve to restrict its application to other government departments. The original recommendation of the TKWG that this responsibility be taken up by Intergovernmental and Constitutional Affairs was aimed at ensuring the use of traditional knowledge throughout all departments of the GNWT.[46]

In fact, throughout the GNWT response, examples of culturally appropriate traditional knowledge use in government appear only in the

context of environmental management. Comments regarding traditional knowledge emphasize its importance in environmental and resource and land management contexts.[47] The text of the Response is accompanied by a series of photographs depicting traditional harvesting and land-oriented subsistence activities.

Aboriginal organizations urged the government to reconsider the Response and encouraged it to revise the document to achieve consistency with the recommendations made at the elders' gathering. The Response, although serving to raise awareness of traditional knowledge, did not go as far as expected in ensuring or promoting its use in public government.

New Possibilities: Implications of the Government's Response

For some members or the TKWG, the government's vague definition of traditional knowledge casts doubt on the GNWT's sincerity in adopting some recommendations of the TKWG. In the Response, the GNWT criticizes the TKWG's broad definition and recommendations encouraging "the use of [traditional] knowledge to develop culturally appropriate ways of governing". The GNWT's reluctance to adopt an innovative approach to the use of traditional knowledge outside of resource management was disappointing. The GNWT Response does not acknowledge that government is culturally based. Although references to the use of traditional knowledge in areas of environmental and resource management are rife in the Response, there is no mention of application of traditional knowledge outside of these areas.

Some observers believe that the government was sincere in its willingness to explore the uses and applications of traditional knowledge. The TKWG was established at a time of fiscal restraint. According to the

government, the deficit situation experienced in 1989 prevented resources being removed from their existing areas of allocation. As well, members of the TKWG did not formally ask the government for additional funding.

The lack of separation of values and knowledge prevented government from "getting their teeth into it [the concept of traditional knowledge.]"[48] Despite political pressure from some Aboriginal MLAs, and several Aboriginal organizations, decision-makers resisted the possibility of creating a traditional knowledge policy which could have any more than negligible effects on government operations.

The GNWT Response was a compromise among all departments, with a view to ensuring it would not compromise their power and authority. For Aboriginal organizations, the junior level of representation from government departments and the small monetary commitment made by the government in support of the TKWG's work betrayed its lack of seriousness toward the initiative.

As well as some disappointment, the Traditional Knowledge Policy and the Response created a heightened public awareness and respect of the significance and use of traditional knowledge. Perceptions that traditional knowledge is based on mythology rather than fact were successfully challenged. The persistent and vocal support of Aboriginal organizations and individuals contributed to awareness about the linkages between traditional knowledge and issues of increased community control, self government, and constitutional development.

Critics of the TKWG argue that the notion of any government policy mandating the use of traditional knowledge is highly unworkable. Others believe a government-wide policy to be futile; control of the use of traditional

knowledge should be determined by communities on an autonomous basis. However, the Traditional Knowledge Policy could provide leverage to communities seeking to change the way programs and services are delivered in their communities.

A GNWT Interdepartmental Working Group on Traditional Knowledge has been established, as well as a grants, contributions, and awards program in support of traditional knowledge. These changes are a direct result of the work of the TKWG. Although its work may not have brought about a framework for fundamental change in the nature of public government institutions in the NWT, it promises a solid basis for wider awareness, acceptance, and use of traditional knowledge within government institutions. In the following chapter, implementation of the policy in two GNWT departments will be explored.

Chapter Two

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the NWT's historical developmental process, within which the GNWT operates, and to explore the theoretical basis for its administration. The discussion draws out tensions flowing from the use of traditional knowledge in western based public government administration, in a society in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures co-exist but are not integrated.

The chapter begins with a brief overview of colonial development in the NWT. The overview establishes the context within which western administration was introduced. However, given the continuous development of the NWT, and the culturally mixed society, this kind of administration is not compatible with the existing society. Discussion then turns to a definition of bureaucracy as conceived by the western European tradition, and implications of its implementation in the NWT given its colonial past and the present day trend toward self determination.

The next section looks at why the use of traditional knowledge within western administration would be a slow and difficult process at best. Bureaucratic resistance to traditional knowledge use is grounded in both philosophical and professional dogma, practical difficulties, and in the professional culture pervasive in western style administration.

In the NWT, colonialism figures prominently as the primary mode of development, with particular application to the development of government institutions. Understanding this mode of development is necessary for an appreciation of its legacy in the social, administrative, and political spheres, which inform current administrative structures, in terms of mandate, goals,

policy direction, and program delivery.

Internal Colonialism and Northern Development

Unlike comparable situations of development in Latin American countries, the North's economic potential does not lie in industrial manufacturing and an abundance of cheap labour, but in the control and exploitation of land and resources. It is the question of who controls these resources, how, and for whose benefit, which has been the primary determinant of the nature of development in the North, not just economically, but also in the political and social spheres.

A survey of northern history puts its development firmly within a paradigm of internal colonialism:

> Economically, internal colonies can be conceptualized as those populations who produce primary commodities for markets in metropolitan centers, who constitute a source of cheap labour for enterprises controlled from the metropolitan centers, and/or who constitute a market for the products and services of the centers. The colonized are excluded from participation or suffer discriminatory participation in the political, cultural, and other institutions of the dominant society. An internal colony constitutes a society within a society based upon racial, linguistic, and/or marked cultural differences as well as differences of social class. It is subject to political and administrative control by the dominant classes and institutions of the metropolis. Defined in this way, internal colonies can exist on a geographical basis or on a racial or cultural basis in ethnically or culturally dual or plural societies.(Not all of these criteria need apply in order to classify a population as an internal colony.)[49]

Economic exploitation and profit seeking have been the primary motivators for Northern colonization.[50] In the NWT, colonial patterns of development have been consistent and sustained since contact. Development and harvesting of the resources is undertaken by the colonizers, transnational

corporations (TNCs), or both, to whom profits accrue almost exclusively.[51] This is coupled with the establishment of requisite infrastructure and rationalized capitalist institutions and administrative structures to meet the needs of capitalist development. This is done in ways ensuring the compliance of the Aboriginal population, which strengthens the dominant position of the colonizers: such as arguing for development in the name of national interests while allowing land claim processes to go slowly. In the past, lack of consultation with the Aboriginal groups affected by development was a hallmark of the process.[52] However, recent developments have seen consultation and cooperation with Aboriginal groups in the immediate exploration areas undertaken by companies, but government still engages in lengthy drawn out land claims processes.[53] At the same time, unresolved land claims result in the development of traditional Aboriginal lands at the discretion and benefit of the traditional players (e.g. TNCs, federal government, business). In light of these persistent development patterns, the question arises: on what basis is such development situated?

According to developers, the answer to this is that they are merely caught in a struggle between the federal government and Aboriginal people over land rights. For example, at the Environmental Assessment Review hearing in Dettah during February 1996, when asked who they thought owned the land, representatives of diamond mine developer BHP Inc. replied that their development was being conducted under the current laws. Operating within the laws of Canada, while at the same time conveniently sidestepping a plethora of larger issues, and avoiding owning up to their role in these issues.

A most unsettling answer to the question may be found in what

Aboriginal people argue is the Canadian "founding myth".[54] This is the basis for the mechanisms of exploitation, domination, and discrimination by the colonizers, thereby enhancing their processes of capital accumulation (e.g.: the Indian Act, Treaties, Territorial status being "lesser" than that of provinces). It is based on a European ethnocentric superiority embedded in the legal doctrine of *terra nullius*. This doctrine posits that no sovereign society existed prior to the arrival of Europeans in what is now Canada. Aboriginal people, living in the North since time immemorial, were "discovered", and subsequently made subjects of the Crown. Thus the lands of the Aboriginal peoples became "Crown" lands and the resources came under the control of the Crown, with the Aboriginal people effectively made wards of the state.

This colonial ethnocentrism also places Aboriginal people at a lower level of development, in terms of "normal" linear progressions of modernization and human development. The colonizers assumed superior political and economic status to the Aboriginal people. Through the capitalist mode of development and modernization, and the accompanying rational administrative, political, and legal approaches to ensure capitalist modernization and development, Aboriginal societies in the North were in large part transformed from primarily collectivist to taking on more individualistic characteristics.[55]

In the North, the federal government pursued a policy of assimilation whereby Aboriginal people were induced to abandon traditional lifestyles involving hunting, trapping, and collective ownership of land and resources. Instead, they were encouraged to adapt lifestyles and customs which fit with modern capitalism and government institutions with liberal individualist and capitalist bases.[56] Government assistance and a cash economy displaced

wholly traditional subsistence lifestyles of many Aboriginal people: children were taken to residential school and prevented from practicing traditional skills, language, and customs. After the collapse of the fur trade, which made up one sector of the subsistence economy, in the 1950s,[57] government support payments to Aboriginal people were tied to school attendance. As a result, many families were compelled to move into communities and abandon full-time pursuit of traditional economic activities. The result was a reinforcement of capitalist values, forcing people into the lower strata of the capitalist economy. [58] While this meant significant social changes, not so many occurred that traditional activities and their requisite knowledge were permanently lost or unrecoverable. While some people, generally those in smaller Aboriginal communities, continued to live a traditional life, other who had settled in towns or regional centers did not continue practicing traditional lifestyles yet retained important aspects of Aboriginal culture.

Given all that is negative about the colonial model, one is hard pressed to justify its usage in a free and democratic society. Reasons for its use such as ethnocentrism, racism, greed, and power were undoubtedly part of the motivation. However, if a primary goal of the Canadian government was to "develop" the North, and embark on a policy of Aboriginal assimilation to bring about some paternalistic version of "the good life," it seems logical this would be done in keeping with contemporary methods acceptable in the larger society. Prevalent thinking encouraged northern development according to a program of modernization tried and tested in the western world, whether inhabitants wanted it or not.

Theoretical Perspectives on Development and Modernization

An understanding of societal development entails understanding linkages of what may be broadly termed as social, economic, and political development. Depending on a given theorist's background and training, major independent and dependent variables will vary, and may include economics, politics, religion, culture, ownership of capital, and numerous other variables, interlinked in infinite combinations.

Classical development theories are premised on circumstances specific to the West, and these form the foundations for most development theory to follow. Smith, Marx, Spencer, Durkheim, and Weber identify a number of elements fundamental to understanding development in western democracies. Yet as early as the late 1800s, the universal applicability of their conceptions of development was questioned.[59] Development theorists of the early twentieth century recognized that not all countries are capable of achieving western patterns of development.

For the greater part of the last century, modernization theorists held fast to a model of unilinear development culminating in industrial modernization. This model approximated what had occurred in western European countries. Its main aspects included capitalism, technological innovation, and institutional structural and role differentiation as part of a rationalization process which constantly sought greater efficiency. Politically, modernization meant the evolution from authoritarian or monarchical regimes to democratic institutions.

Modernization was viewed as inevitable, and the model for it was the industrialized democracies of the West. However, in many non-western countries, the miracle of modernization did not progress as smoothly as had been predicted, and theorists attempted to explain "anomalies" of

development measured against the western models.

Paralleling the developmental situations of the "third world", the developmental process of the Northwest Territories quickly proved to be fraught with developmental "anomalies". Rich in both renewable and non-renewable resources, its modernization was seen by politicians and industry outside the North as a desirable and inevitable economic reality. However, Aboriginal communities within the territory were opposed to development within a modernization framework.[60] While traditional ways of life were disrupted to accommodate development, jobs, training, and wealth accrued almost exclusively to southern corporations, experts, suppliers, and workers.[61]

After the 1950s, classical theories of unilinear development gave way to analyses based on colonialism and Marxist critiques of the capitalist structures driving development primarily in Latin American countries. Such theories hold that capitalist structures create a dependent relationship between countries of the "core" and "periphery" at the periphery's expense. These analyses were termed dependency theory, as espoused by Ernesto Laclau and Andre Gunder Frank. Adapted for an analysis of northern development, these theories highlight similarities between northern and Latin American development.[62]

Theories such as colonialism and dependency offer important insights into the processes and consequences of capitalist economic and political development. Yet these do not shed light on administrative development, or the relationship between processes of development in political, economic, and social spheres and that of public administration.

The next section acquaints the reader with the classic bureaucratic

model, as defined by Max Weber in the nineteenth century, which forms the basis for western bureaucracies, including those operating in the NWT. Weber's theory is a reasonably accurate description of the theoretical basis underlying the GNWT administrative philosophy. However, it is important to note that unlike most societies where this kind of administrative philosophy is the norm, the type of administration in the NWT does not fit with the NWT's societal makeup and characteristics. The next section looks at bases of legitimacy as well as defining essential characteristics of such bureaucracies.

Theoretical Basis for Bureaucratic Administration

Sociologist Max Weber delineated a theory of rationalization, a process he defined as the devaluation of tradition in human affairs.[63] Division of labour is part of the efficiency and rationalization required by capitalist development. Its ultimate expression is in the form of bureaucracy. Weber developed a system of "ideal types", describing the circumstances in which various types of administrative systems exist, and their basis for legitimacy.

Relevant to this discussion is the rational legal model of bureaucracy, which exists in the NWT. The organization acquires legitimacy, obedience and adherence based on a widely held belief in the legality of enacted rules, and the right of those in authority under such rules to issue commands. Obedience is owed to the legally established impersonal order, extending to individuals exercising the authority of office, but only within that specific

scope of authority. [64]

Important aspects of bureaucracy in this classical model are as follows: specialized, highly differentiated administrative roles; recruitment on the basis of achievement, rather than by ascriptive criteria; placement, transfer, and promotion on the basis of universalistic versus particularistic criteria; administrators are salaried professionals who view work as a career adhering to professional standards versus loyalty-based patronage positions; administrative decision making in a rational context of hierarchy, responsibility, and discipline, unaffected by "outside" considerations (i.e.: family, political, friendship ties).

Like most ideal types, Weber's model has been difficult to attain. While useful for measurement, analysis, and prediction, functioning bureaucracies at best roughly approximate the Weberian model. Not all elements of the bureaucratic ideal may be present, and often, irrational characteristics persist throughout a wide variety of organizational structures, both in the private and public sectors. Bureaucracies often lack rigid inclusion of or adherence to essential elements of the rational legal bureaucracy. Despite such deviations from the ideal models, administrations function fairly efficiently. The late twentieth century preoccupation with bureaucracy as an instrument not only of public administration, but also of social policies such as promotion of professional and wage equity among the oppressed and disadvantaged groups is one example of the purposeful deviation from the Weberian model.[65]

Bureaucratic systems have changed demographically due to various social forces operating in contemporary society. Social movements geared toward creating awareness and promoting the goals of traditionally oppressed

and under represented groups have assisted in this cause. The consequent increased awareness has resulted in affirmative action, quotas, and equity policies in an attempt to shift the demographics to reflect prevalent social values. This has also opened up discussion of the positive ways in which these new forces can also bring about changes to the system itself. In the case of the NWT, recognition of the necessity to include Aboriginal peoples in the work force undoubtedly assisted in achieving recognition of the accumulated experiential knowledge base of the Aboriginal cultures, and the validity of its application in the operations of government, as indicated by the establishment of the GNWT Traditional Knowledge Policy.

Characteristics of public administration reflect the kinds of norms, values, and philosophies which drive its functioning, indicating what the public may expect of it. "Characteristics" may be defined as the combination of Weberian aspects contained within it, and the formal and substantive nature of those aspects.

Weber's rational-legal type of bureaucracy is synonymous with modern administration characterized by highly specialized and circumscribed functional units: hiring, promotion and assignment of tasks based on merit and achievement criteria, and decision-making and conduct within a rational context of hierarchy, responsibility, and discipline. This differs from less rationalized administrative structures associated with traditional societies, where many roles and responsibilities are handled by few people, and where qualifications give way to rights based on non-achievement criteria. Officials are not required to possess specialized knowledge restricted to specific areas of responsibility and decision making. In a traditional system, public administration duties are intermingled with religious and economic duties,

and ascriptive rather than achievement criteria determines who fills what roles. Personal loyalty or ties to leaders may determine an official's influence, power, and rewards. [66]

In a transitional situation, which La Palombara terms a "dual" situation, it is argued that "one would expect to find a tension-creating juxtaposition of traditional and rational legal structures."[67] This stands to reason; if thoroughly capitalist societies of the West are hard pressed to maintain ideal bureaucratic models, how can non-European cultures be expected to smoothly adapt to systems with foreign cultural roots, expectations, and outputs?

Initially, governments, such as that found in the NWT, are introduced fully formed, to avoid any jurisdictional vacuum which could lead to the breakdown of social order. These institutions are built, staffed, and maintained by Europeans or indigenous people viewed as "virtual" Europeans -- products of the colonizer's religious, cultural, social, and educational institutions.

Participation in colonial institutions enables indigenous populations to use acquired knowledge of institutions and processes to gain some power relative to that of the colonizers. In the NWT such gains have not resulted in power equivalent to that possessed by the colonizers. This is evident through the negotiation and settlement of land claims among Aboriginal groups, the GNWT, and federal government. It is also evident in the federal government's recognition of Aboriginal people's inherent right to self government. A significant factor limiting gains made and resulting in potential changes is that while a majority of the politicians are Aboriginal, and political institutions have a distinctly northern flavor, the bureaucratic

system and the cultural and educational backgrounds of the large majority of its officials remain thoroughly western science-based.

Therein lies the tension. The transitional society, caught between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal worlds, somehow has to seek accommodation of its population not only at a political level, but also at the bureaucratic level. Given that thus far, non-Aboriginal people and their institutions have been in control, and in terms of the administration , retain that control, this is not easy. The traditional knowledge policy is in part an attempt to bring about change.

In the NWT, transitions have occurred at the societal and political level, but have not found a comfortable accommodation within the systems of public administration.[68] Forging a new bureaucratic accommodation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people is not without tensions. The history and processes leading up to the implementation of the traditional knowledge policy in the bureaucracy exemplifies many of these tensions.

In 1967, the federal government set up a complete colonial administration, importing rules, regulations, structure, hierarchy and personnel straight from southern Canada.[69] Gradually, this has evolved into a government with province-like powers, which adheres largely to the original bureaucratic structure.

Scholarly research into the nature of public administration in the Canadian North is sparse at best. However, general observations note the surprisingly pervasive "southern" style of the bureaucracy, whereas the political institutions and processes and distinctively northern.[70] According to Cameron and White:

> Many in the NWT contend that the unusual adaptations of the Westminster system are a good deal less significant for territorial governance than the pervasive influence of the southern-style, predominantly non-Aboriginal public service...The GNWT is organized along roughly the same functional lines as provincial public services and has a similar hierarchical structure premised on command and control imperatives.[71]

The NWT bureaucracy has begun to react to the pressures of communities and its indigenous peoples. This has been the result of a number of processes undertaken at the federal and territorial levels, including devolution, processes of division and constitutional development, settlement of land claims, and increasing resource development. The Aboriginal population is better educated, informed, and able to access and use information compared with previous decades, and these factors have contributed greatly to Aboriginal people's ability to take control of the main forces shaping their lives.

While forces in the larger society have begun to change the political and social face of the North, the bureaucracy has not changed to the same extent. Although 60 percent of the NWT population is Aboriginal, only 38 percent of GNWT employees are Aboriginal; most of these occupy low-level positions, with a very small percentage in the ranks of middle and upper management.[72] This is despite a progressive affirmative action hiring policy and training and educational opportunities.

The bureaucracy has since its beginnings operated as a highly differentiated organization along the lines of a Weberian ideal. While officials have sometimes altered its functioning to fit with local ways, it remains a predominantly western-style bureaucracy. Flowing from that structure and organization is the enshrining of western values, norms, and

standards. The traditional knowledge policy seeks to integrate Aboriginal traditional knowledge into the bureaucratic structure, policy, decision, and program delivery processes. As the larger society moves toward recognition of Aboriginal cultures and First Nations, the policy promotes their recognition in the bureaucratic sphere. However, resistance to change, a hallmark of the typical bureaucratic administration, must be overcome.

The next section outlines, first, reasons commonly recognized as the basis of resistance to change in bureaucratic organizations. This is followed by a description of the kinds of changes that implementation of the traditional knowledge policy on a wide scale would demand. The last section discusses the kinds of theoretical challenges these changes represent.

The Traditional Knowledge Policy: Philosophical and Practical Change

As discussed earlier in the section on Weber's ideal rational legal bureaucratic model, western philosophical underpinnings flow directly from the secular, scientific tradition of the West. Within modern bureaucracies, extensive professionalization is inevitable. The climate of the administration creates a professional culture synchronous with the fundamental western science orientation of processes and practices within the bureaucracy. At a philosophical level, the change of culture is two-fold: the culture of the dominant society and the culture of the professionalization pervasive in the bureaucracy.

In the rational-legal bureaucracy, specialized functions are the norm; these are carried out by individuals possessing qualifications ensuring minimum level of competence in performing duties, maintaining the position, or being competitive for promotion.[73]

Differentiation, or rationalization of the process required to achieve the desired outcome, in many ways embodies a philosophy directly at odds with the world view particular to Aboriginal cultures in the NWT, known as traditional knowledge. The Traditional Knowledge Policy itself in many respects is at odds with the vision of the usage of traditional knowledge as held by the TKWG. The policy and its underlying principles are attached as Appendix B.

Prior to discussing the criticisms of the government's response, the following section details some of the commonly understood and accepted basic differences between traditional knowledge and western science.

From a western perspective, traditional knowledge is holistic, subjective, experiential, and orally based.[74] It is often transmitted by stories and legends rooted within the Aboriginal cultures, involving spiritual and religious beliefs, and cultural customs. Knowledge of the culture provides necessary context for an accurate understanding of traditional knowledge. Lack of understanding of basic aspects of culture hampers a full understanding of concepts. This contrasts with western science, which is, in a general sense, reductionist, objective, positivist, and transmitted by the written word. The following chart is adapted from a discussion about differences between traditional knowledge and western science in terms of philosophical approach, assumptions, and methodology; in Lore, edited by Martha Johnson.[75]

TABLE 1-2 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WESTERN SCIENCE AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Traditional Knowledge	*Western Science*
oral transmission	written transmission
experience based	abstract concepts tested
spiritual element pervasive	non-spiritual
co-existence	control
holistic	reductionist
intuitive	analytical
qualitative	quantitative
diachronic	synchronic
holistic concept	conceptual reduction
cumulative, collective information revisited and revised	methods for generating and testing data to create general laws

The difficulties arising from the interlinkage of western science and traditional knowledge relates to the manner and extent of traditional knowledge inclusion. Two important criticisms of the GNWT Response to the Report of the TKWG were raised by the Dene Cultural Institute,[76] relating to (1) recommendations about the philosophical basis for government administration, and (2) the impact of the lead departments' mandate to the application of the policy on a broad scale.

The first criticism identifies the cultural basis of the institutions for government as western; in the policy, the government does not acknowledge that it is this cultural bias that must be addressed before meaningful change might take place.

According to La Palombara's observations of bureaucracy in developing countries, "large-scale governmental enterprise can evidently be managed through structures that do not adhere rigidly to the requisites of classical bureaucracy."[77]

To be relevant to Aboriginal cultures, aspects of the cultures and the cultural world views must be taken into account at the administrative or process level in order to affect outcomes.[78] Incorporating traditional knowledge at this level would lead to interlinkage of the two cultures as the basis for governance.

However, the means by which such a change might be implemented are not discussed in the government's response beyond giving broad generalizations such as giving a "lead role" in spearheading the policy to the Department of Renewable Resources, and assigning responsibility for the promotion of traditional knowledge activities within departments to traditional knowledge coordinators.

Translating the policy into practice raises two significant organizing concepts for the analysis of bureaucratic resistance to the incorporation of traditional knowledge within a diffracted western bureaucracy, namely, the competition for scarce resources, and a necessary philosophical and procedural reorientation of the bureaucracy. Basic changes would require significant resources. At the individual level, it would require a philosophical reorientation for people attempting its incorporation, reconciling an understanding of western science-based methods with a broad understanding of traditional knowledge. For example, bureaucrats would first have to accept on a philosophical level the validity of the information before seeking its empirical incorporation.

During consultations with elders prior to issuing its response to the TKWG's Report, the government received many suggestions about how traditional knowledge might be incorporated into government. These were wide ranging, including examples relevant for education, justice, environmental management, housing, etc. However, the government, in its policy and response to the report of the TKWG, restricted examples of Traditional knowledge use in government to issues pertaining to environmental management. This is significant for several reasons.

It is significant because the policy provides guidance to all departments; explicit mention of some areas of use and not others opens up the possibility for departments to ignore the policy or consider it as inapplicable. It implicitly relieves pressure on departments other than the department of Renewable Resources to examine the issue in detail. Such a process of consideration would likely not be embraced by many departments; it requires time, resources, and commitment. Perceived lack of urgency would quickly reduce its incorporation into the list of priorities for that department.

Two concepts were identified earlier for the analysis of bureaucratic resistance to using traditional knowledge: competition for resources and the philosophical and procedural reorientation of the bureaucracy. These are discussed in detail below.

Competition for Scarce Resources

Unlike many large organizations, government administration is not judged on a strict economic input-output analysis. In the absence of an empirically measurable output market, there is no direct way of evaluating

output in relation to the cost of production.[79] Government departments, funded by tax revenue, do not necessarily produce output accessed by funders, at the individual or community level.

Difficulty arises in undertaking cost-benefit analyses of programs when objective criteria -- against which "value for money" may be gauged -- are subject to a large variety of competing factors. The extent to which these factors contribute to the achievement of social policy goals may not be easily measured.

Departments are in competition with one another for funding from a central agency. Given bureaucracy's historical inherent tendency to expand, competition among divisions within departments also imposes constraints on how scarce resources are allocated.

The scarcity of resources and the consciousness of government of public cynicism of rule-oriented, unionized bureaucracies, coupled with increasing expectations for departments to do more with less, presents a challenge for resource allocation. To do the same things in a new way requiring, at least initially, additional resources, presents difficulties. Implementation of the traditional knowledge policy is a case in which required changes would include retraining, re-evaluation of philosophy, and determining how this translates into process.

Scarcity of resources also lends credibility to arguments in favour of a western bureaucracy in keeping with western philosophy. Free from the strictures of cultural or religious taboos and dictates, but also from the need to produce tangible outputs along the lines of a private enterprise, it is argued that bureaus are technically superior to alternatives; they provide the "most efficient known method of carrying out certain vital social functions...."[80]

However, it is also allowed that this efficiency may occur at some expense:

> The fact that bureaus provide the most efficient known method of carrying out certain vital social functions does not mean that they will perform those functions in a fashion that is 'socially optimal'.[81]

The term "socially optimal" refers in a broad sense to society benefiting from a perspective emphasizing social goals instead of an economic input-output analysis. Long-standing dissatisfaction with the GNWT stems from the fact that more emphasis seems to be placed on economic or professional rather than social optimality. While effectively meeting standards and demands as determined by professional requirements, methods used to carry out tasks are based on a cultural outlook foreign to indigenous residents. Competition for scarce resources is often cited as the main reason for maintaining western based practices; doing things differently requires additional resources already in short supply. In such a scenario, cultural relevance is often seen as a luxury.

Philosophical Reorientation

The cultural and philosophical reorientation the traditional knowledge policy requires is two-fold. First, there is the western science basis of the bureaucracy pervasive throughout the programs, procedures, and personnel recruitment. Second, the professional culture of the specific professions based on formal schooling, entrenched and encouraged, presents a potential barrier to reorientation.

The modern nature of NWT administration requires the specialization of roles within departments. As a result, many positions are

highly technical. Possession of technical skills or ability to perform are easily determined based on recognizable certification, such as a degree or diploma compatible with demands of responsibilities.

Methods of certification are generally restricted to an exclusively western science-based approach, which does not take into account methods of inquiry used in traditional knowledge. The differences in the two kinds of knowledge are significant, however the two types of knowledge are often complementary rather than at odds. Ellen Bielawski articulates some of these differences, namely, that indigenous knowledge is based on any means of inquiry and action, including observation and experience, resulting in a world view constructed over centuries based on oral transmission of knowledge. In contrast, western science sees itself as self-critical, reliant on replication of results and their application for validation.[82]

Bielawski's discussion of indigenous knowledge focuses on Inuit knowledge, centering on the notion of cultural re-adaptation, an inevitability flowing from the confrontation of two distinct cultures' epistemologies. Application of this concept to administrative processes requires bureaucrats to undergo a bureaucratic readaptation: to understand and incorporate organizing concepts and ways of knowing from traditional knowledge into administrative processes. While in some cases this may require more resources in the short run, (i.e., local consultation), the analysis of benefits or value of outcomes in many respects justifies the expense, in terms of achieving a culturally appropriate administration, and doing things in keeping with local value systems and ways of life.

Acceptance of a philosophy firmly rooted in a culture historically dominated and de-valued by western culture and processes of development

requires thought beyond simple resource considerations. This involves three aspects, namely (1) understanding of Aboriginal culture, (2) frank questioning and scrutiny of its basis of inquiry and world view, and (3) respect for Aboriginal culture, world view, and traditional knowledge.

Fear of the unknown, coupled with a natural propensity toward the familiarity with established norms complicates the process of learning about different philosophical approaches to knowledge. After accepting its validity, traditional knowledge use might be possible. The following discussion assumes two things: first, that NWT public government bureaucrats are largely non-Aboriginal with superficial or little understanding of Aboriginal culture, and second, that bureaucrats have been trained in western based institutions according to western standards.[83]

How bureaucrats feel about traditional knowledge use in the administration naturally affects how challenges to its use will ultimately be resolved. Enthusiasm for traditional knowledge or disrespect for it will be evident. One important factor is the emphasis the departmental leadership places on the importance of using traditional knowledge. For bureaucrats at headquarters, having little daily face-to-face contact with communities, its use is far less urgent than for program delivery staff in the communities.

In a bureaucracy based on achievement hiring criteria, a culture of bureaucratic professionalization is reinforced, and one aspect of self-interest is to preserve and increase the value of professionalization. Furthering one's own professional career and adhering to the standards of the profession takes precedence. Any threat to decreasing the value of skills and qualifications or altering standards is consequently resisted.

In order to effectively use traditional knowledge, people must be able to

appreciate its utility. The nature of traditional knowledge is such that scrutiny and assessment of its utility could only occur after becoming familiar with it and the culture in which it is rooted. Lack of contact with Aboriginal people or authorities in certain areas of traditional knowledge would prevent understanding and appreciation of the culture and knowledge. Such contact is necessary to enable bureaucrats to reconcile complementary knowledge and methods of inquiry with their western-based training, and understand how the two might be most appropriately interlinked. Understanding would logically lead to either acceptance of traditional knowledge on its own merit, or rejection of it, based on the perspective and subjective understanding of the individual. The process of learning about, understanding, and respecting traditional knowledge must occur to result in any thinking being done by bureaucrats as to how linkage or incorporation might occur.

Procedural Change

Change within the bureaucratic culture would be a necessary precursor to procedural change. Changes would have to be compatible with 1) existing mandates, 2) sustaining or improving prescribed or required standards, and 3) equitable resource allocation.

The translation of philosophical change at a procedural level has the potential to be extensive. It would require additional effort to fulfill unchanged goals or mandates. For example, it would require consultation, research, training, and policy revision, which could be difficult to implement in a differentiated western bureaucracy. The introduction of new procedures and reorientation of established processes would necessarily involve an initial additional expenditure of resources in order to achieve a well-balanced

and well-considered approach to the incorporation of the new values. Given the particular nature of traditional knowledge and the broad understanding of the subject necessary to ensuring its effective use, an initial training period or learning curve would be necessary to acclimatize individuals to its incorporation. This might be avoided if knowledge and understanding of traditional knowledge issues were a prerequisite for hiring. However, the reality is that in the administrative adjustment process, much of the personnel would remain the same, as would much of the required technical training and program standards.

For many departments and departmental activities, traditional knowledge presents an opportunity to formally incorporate a complementary realm of knowledge into decision-making. Mandates and statutory responsibilities would not necessarily be compromised with the use of traditional knowledge in decision making. However, in terms of usage of resources, the situation may be rather different: traditional knowledge incorporation may involve (1) training of staff, (2) collection of information, and (3) consultative processes which under a strictly western-based administrative system, are not standard costs of doing business. Thus the level of commitment to traditional knowledge use will determine the kinds of tradeoffs which must be made in terms of how far the (primarily non-Aboriginal) administrative leadership is willing to go to accommodate traditional knowledge.

Changes in standards would be a necessary and inevitable result of traditional knowledge use in government administration. As part of a value system based on Aboriginal cultures, with close spiritual ties to the land and animals, a distinctly different value system will confront the value system

upon which the rational western administrative structure is based. For resource management, this might mean a sharper focus on environmental protection versus resource development. Thus, in this one instance, the introduction of traditional knowledge as a weighty factor in decision-making also holds the promise of possible value reorientation in terms of environmental standards and public standards. At the professional level, professional standards may undergo readjustment: medical practices for example, are perhaps one of the most contentious areas for reconciling western and traditional knowledge. The government has a legal responsibility to provide medical services to all; based on a finite number of resources, it must be determined how these services might be most cost-effective both from an economic and a social policy perspective. The issue of standards and safe practice is another area which presents difficult philosophical and legal questions.

Conclusion

This chapter outlines the legal-rational bases of the NWT administration within the context of the territories' colonial development. Processes of development in the NWT are such that while having a thoroughly western-style modern administration with governing responsibilities, it operates within a society in transition, situated between a traditional and developed society.

At a theoretical level, the possibility for bureaucratic resistance to the incorporation of traditional knowledge into decision-making is significant. Traditional knowledge use within a rational-legal administrative system is confronted with issues relating to resource allocation, education and

acceptance, and a host of changes which must take place at the levels of cultural understanding, intellectual acceptance, and administrative process. For example, as the next chapter demonstrates, the degrees of usage and acceptance of traditional knowledge between departments and even within individual departments may vary. The next two chapters examine the progress which has been made in meeting these obstacles within the departments of Renewable Resources and Health and Social Services during the first five years of the Traditional Knowledge Policy's implementation.

Chapter Three

Introduction

The preceding discussion has shown that departmental structures, processes, and procedural factors impact on policy implementation. This chapter focuses on the implementation of the traditional knowledge policy in two departments: Health and Social Services and Renewable Resources. The policy provides a broad framework encouraging traditional knowledge use, without providing a method or procedural description for attaining its objectives. Difficulties with the uncertain nature of the prescribed changes, lack of resources allocated in support of policy objectives, standard administrative processes, and culture further complicate implementation.

The first section outlines the variables under discussion. The second section examines implementation within the Department of Health and Social Services, and the relevant variables at headquarters and the regional level. The third section focuses on implementation within the Department of Renewable Resources. The fourth section looks at Aboriginal organizations' perspectives on policy implementation and the roles of Aboriginal organizations in this process. The final section concludes the chapter with an overall comparison between the two departments.

Variables are separated into two categories. The first category, Departmental Responsibilities and Organizational Structure, includes procedural and resource issues affecting policy implementation. This discussion encompasses issues such as employment demographics, regional functions, and programs and services offered. The second category, Departmental Culture and Philosophy, includes variables such as

professional and departmental cultures, priority setting and relationships with Aboriginal organizations, departmental officials' views of the policy, and philosophical considerations such as the substantive and epistemological fit between traditional knowledge and western science which informs the department's work.

The two departments differ in terms of their respective success with the policy's implementation, and internally differ between headquarters and regional policy implementation. The research suggests that relative success in policy implementation correlates with involvement of traditional knowledge holders and Aboriginal people in decision-making, policy and program implementation, and program and service delivery processes. Departments which are likely to welcome consultation with Aboriginal organizations and communities are also likely to be sympathetic to traditional knowledge use.

Responsibilities and Organizational Structure : Department of Health and Social Services

The mandate of the department is "to promote, maintain, and enhance the health and well being of individuals and families in the Northwest Territories." [84] The department lists 10 goals guiding its activities during the fiscal year, focusing largely on assisting residents' access to services, enabling individual well being, and promoting individual responsibility in achieving wellness.

The department's main service provision vehicles are the regional health boards. The boards are central to the implementation of an integrated community-based delivery model for all health and social service programs.

This model fits with the community wellness strategy initiative, which provides a basis for partnerships between Aboriginal organizations, non-government organizations, and government.[85]

The Department is divided into four divisions: Directorate, community programs and services, health services development, and health and hospital boards.[86] During the 1995-96 fiscal year, the department budgeted total operations and maintenance expenditures at $262.2 million, and total person year requirements at approximately three hundred and fifteen permanent full-time positions. Approximately 4.4 percent of the budget was destined for the twelve communities of the Inuvik region, and of its approximately 315 employees, approximately 160, or 51 percent worked at headquarters in Yellowknife, and about 49, or 15.5 percent of the total were stationed throughout the 12 communities of the Inuvik region.[87] The above numbers do not include money earmarked for the Inuvik Regional Health Board, totalling about $15 million, for its approximately 230 employees.

Department of Health and Social Services: Headquarters

The Department of Health and Social Services headquarters in Yellowknife is responsible for departmental stewardship through planning, priority-setting, policy-making, program design and administration. The organization is highly-structured along specialized lines in a hierarchical manner, due to the technical skill requirements of staff. Officials are responsible for overseeing development and implementation of programs and territory-wide initiatives, and offering advice and expertise as required.

Procedural Considerations

A fundamental barrier to traditional knowledge linkage within programs and services is that government systems and criteria are based on a western model and perspective, at odds with the needs and perspectives of a northern environment and Aboriginal social and cultural customs. The systems and criteria themselves act as barriers as they do not allow for the incorporation of traditional knowledge. The model's usefulness is profoundly compromised as it adheres to its western theoretical basis, which in turn informs procedures and methods.

In the Department of Health and Social Services, this is complicated by the nature of the services provided. Many services must meet basic universal standards to obtain funding and meet professional criteria, such as hospital accreditation standards, and the registration requirements for nurses and doctors, which include formal certification from a recognized training institution. Many of the standards are set by the federal government and apply nationally. While this does not necessarily prevent procedural changes, it does create a "professionalized" culture whose weighty influence is pervasive throughout the department. As a result, changes are slow, and often subject to intense scrutiny and even opposition.

For example, applying the traditional knowledge policy would probably require revisions to the Medical Professions Act. Because of the nature of the standards involved, and the necessity for legislation governing the conduct of medical professionals, legal recognition of traditional healers would also require some kind of regulation. Standards, practices, and regulation for traditional knowledge holders are at best, a long way off. Therefore, while legislation might recognize "alternative methods", lack of regulation of healers might cause the medical community to be slow to embrace the healers

and their methods.

Resources

Quantitative and qualitative measures of effectiveness are in constant tension within the department. Departmental expenditures depend on the health needs of the population, which often means that proposed low-priority expenditures may have to be delayed until the end of the fiscal year. Political and internal departmental support for new programs may wane in the face of resource constraints affecting standard service delivery. The resources required for the design and implementation of new delivery methods, however more culturally appropriate, come up against bottom-line considerations. Often low-priority programs are not low priority because they are not important or valid; but rather because programs deemed to be essential or more important deplete available resources. For example, funds for medical travel, although based on previous years' expenditures, are difficult to predict and depend on circumstances. The same is true for social assistance.

Departmental officials emphasized the need to balance statutory obligations efficiently under current time and resource constraints with using traditional knowledge in programs and services. One barrier is the lack of quantitative standards and accreditation of traditional Aboriginal practices and practitioners, standards commonly used by western society. Without training, western knowledge experts and traditional knowledge experts cannot tell the difference between reliable and unreliable information or practices in the unfamiliar culture. Professional groups on staff in the department of Health and Social Services have statutory and legal

responsibilities according to Canadian laws. Changing current practices would require careful revision and study against territorial and federal legislation and standards.

Departmental Culture and Philosophical Issues

In Yellowknife, the main focus is stewardship of departmental programs, services and administration. The nature of the work carried out at headquarters results in little face-to-face contact with clients. For example, contact may be limited to concept-level discussions with outside agency representatives. In the meantime, departmental work requires extensive interaction among departmental staff, with community contact limited largely to solicitation of advice regarding specific issues, and very little client contact or cross-cultural awareness training with program delivery. The majority of those interviewed at headquarters had little or no experience working in small, isolated Aboriginal communities. In addition to, or perhaps as a result of the foregoing factors, a high degree of professionalized culture is evident. The majority of employees in technical, policy-making, and decision/management positions are non-Aboriginal people, although many are long-term northerners.

Because of the 'technocratic' culture, the criteria for evaluation, assessment, and funding mimic patterns used in southern administrative settings. As a result, efforts to incorporate traditional knowledge often clash with Western criteria. For example, traditional healers must meet standards established within the western paradigm, and community created standards are irrelevant. After all, government cannot and should not act on behalf of the community. As the main funding source and the organization ultimately

responsible for health and social services, the department's goal is to fulfill its responsibilities the best way it can, which may prevent its handing over control of processes related to evaluation, assessment, and funding criteria.

Priority-Setting and Relationships with Aboriginal Organizations

Priorities are determined in accordance with statutory responsibilities and mandate. In a broad sense, the priority for headquarters is to provide overall direction and assistance to regional health boards in promoting overarching goals of promoting community and individual wellness and self reliance.

Relationships with Aboriginal organizations are in part determined by priorities. As more and more communities seek to take over local administration and program design and delivery, headquarters staff seek input from Aboriginal organizations. Although there is no directive or policy requiring consultation, Aboriginal organizations are consulted regularly; this has become a convention. Aboriginal organizations are viewed as instrumental in development of programs and policies, advice, and in some cases, implementation. However, they are not necessarily provided with consistent or ongoing resource support to maintain and ensure consistent participation and input into government initiatives.

Philosophical Considerations

Many interviewees believe that change requires individuals' understanding the purpose and goals of the traditional knowledge policy. Government can try to ensure its workforce is informed and educated. At the same time, Aboriginal organizations also have a responsibility in this area.

Their input would assist in the provision of appropriately presented and accurate information.

Cross-cultural training is another area which many believe should receive greater emphasis. This type of training is the first necessary step towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences between Aboriginal and western cultures. For employees in small communities, cross-cultural training is vital to ensuring mutual understanding, respect, and communication. However, this training is seen largely as an 'add on'. Its delivery is ad hoc with no formal responsibility assigned to any individual position within the department. This results in many avoidable situations which have created animosity between staff and clients.

For example, in one community, a nurse had a pet dog in her home. Her accommodation was in the same building as the health center. Elders in the community viewed dogs living in dwellings as a cultural taboo, and would not enter the health center. While the nurse could not understand what the problem was, the elders could not understand why the nurse would do such a strange thing.[88] While this example is instructive for the regional operations, it also sets out a strong argument for the importance of cross-cultural awareness among headquarters staff in charge of policy-making, facility planning, and staff recruitment.

View of the Traditional Knowledge Policy

At headquarters, there seems to be an awareness of traditional knowledge on an intellectual level but not on a personal level. Some employees understand traditional knowledge as useful or important on an intellectual level, yet lack personal experience and resources to engage in

rigorous philosoph[illegible]nation at a personal level.

Many offici[illegible]the 'ghettoization' of traditional knowledge, in which a lack of a[illegible]nd understanding of traditional knowledge leads to usage within a c[illegible]nscribed area. For example, the hospital may serve traditional foods or use traditional healers' services, but may not endeavor to find out about traditional local medicines, or hold traditional healing inservices with health professionals, which would go beyond a superficial or commonly accepted traditional knowledge use in the current system.

Department of Health and Social Services: Inuvik Region

Procedural Considerations

In the region, the close contact of caregivers with clients and the involvement of community representatives on the health board promotes increased use of Aboriginal traditional knowledge. The ways in which programs and services are implemented and in which innovations in these areas take place are fairly responsive to local needs. The necessity and ultimate goal of developing a credible message to the community demands culturally relevant procedural changes in some areas. For example, throughout the Department of Health and Social Services, confidentiality is of the utmost importance. However, some communities have determined that this principle often works to the disadvantage of the community interest and often perpetuates negative lifestyle choices. The community is kept away from the affairs of one of its members, and cannot be involved in resolving the situation. In a small, isolated community, this could have devastating effects.

As a result, in some communities, the confidentiality principle has been reworked to be used to the benefit of the community interest. Social workers may attend band council meetings to update council and chief on the situations of troubled individuals or to ask advice or assistance in specific matters. This promotes greater trust and cooperation between the government and the band council, and positions the community to be a part of conflict resolution and determining a course of action. In such a case, the established western individualistic standards are dispensed with. In the past, the confidentiality rule has created negative situations, promoting suspicion of government officials within communities, and excluding community members from assisting with issues in their community.

Another example is the Mental Health Pilot Project in the Inuvik region. The three-year project involved the placement of mental health workers in each community in the region. In evaluating the proposal, some communities were concerned that the government evaluation criteria did not reflect a community perspective; they rejected the necessity for fundamental aspects of the government criteria such as time lines. Autonomy was necessary for the effectiveness of the project, and required trust building on both sides. The project was managed by a group representing the regional Aboriginal groups and the territorial government, a kind of 'co-management' arrangement which allowed for equal input from the parties involved.

Resources

Employees interviewed recognized the necessity of working with the community to use resources most effectively. People who work with clients

witness the missed opportunities and wasted resources resulting from programs designed and implemented without the community's input. While people interviewed recognized that this may require additional planning, research, and implementation resources, they dismissed the costs as negligible compared with the potential wastes involved with ignoring the needs. One notable expenditure of resources towards this end which has bridged many gaps between the western health system and Aboriginal communities is the role of the Community Health Representative (CHR). There is one CHR in each community, who works closely with the health practitioners as a liaison between the health workers and the community. CHRs are people from the community, who are trusted and credible messengers charged with disseminating information throughout the community and acting in a symbolic and sometimes literal sense as a translator and liaison. CHRs receive a thorough basic training program which is augmented regularly by training and professional development programs and short courses in a variety of health, lifestyle, and special issues of local importance, such as contaminants, AIDS, nutrition, and medical/science terminology.

Departmental Culture and Philosophical Issues

Priority-Setting and Relationships With Aboriginal Organizations

At the regional level, priority setting and relationships with Aboriginal organizations are shaped largely through the seventeen-member health board. The health board has members from each community in the region, meeting on a regular basis to review issues and make governing decisions in regards to the regional health system. Communities select representatives to

the board through a variety of methods. Often the priorities of communities for their area are reflected in the decisions made by the board, whose members are resident in the communities and are well-versed in the local situation.

At headquarters, consultation with affected Aboriginal organizations and communities on policy, legislative and program changes and initiatives is a convention. While no policy exists ensuring a systematic review and participation process for community and outside organizations, the setup of the government system naturally lends itself to comprehensive consultation initiatives. At the same time, it also allows the government to retain ultimate control over how and to what degree stakeholders are involved in policy and program initiatives.

Philosophical Considerations

Most interviewees believed real change would not happen in the system until Aboriginal people themselves take control of it. This is viewed as a fundamental precursor of change, as the participants in the current administration have no vested interest in change, and a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Interviewees also recognized the necessity of individuals within the system supporting such changes in order to make them happen. However, most concluded that this would not happen on a meaningful scale until Aboriginal people made up the majority of employees, which would be unlikely in the immediate future.

Because the department's formal cross-cultural training assumes a western science paradigm, people largely avoid traditional methods of learning, i.e., spending time with elders in an informal setting where

traditional knowledge would be best learned or most effectively understood.

In smaller communities, informal daily interaction is unavoidable. In Yellowknife, the opposite is true. For health workers from the South, where Aboriginal peoples are a minority, prior preparation is needed particularly for nurses going into small communities. This preparation is the responsibility of the Health Board members in the communities but even then, their ability to meet the responsibility raises the issue of burnout. Board members are often individuals who are fairly active in the community already. This kind of pressure contributes to burnout and attrition.

Aboriginal respondents viewed the colonial legacy of the original government institutions and procedures experienced by many Aboriginal communities as part of the reason why there is tension surrounding traditional knowledge acceptance and use in the western based and predominantly non-Aboriginal bureaucracy. As discussed in chapter two, colonialism played a fundamental role in the changes and development which took place in the North which resulted in the destruction of traditional practices and lifestyles. Attempts to resurrect traditional practices and incorporate traditional knowledge meaningfully into governing institutions as the rest of the world moves toward an increasingly technologically oriented and global society were questioned by some Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents. Some non-Aboriginal people interviewed, perhaps less knowledgeable about the nature and significance of traditional knowledge for Aboriginal cultures, view traditional knowledge as 'hocus pocus' -- superstitions which do not deserve real consideration, much less incorporation into 'legitimate' programs and services.

Rejection of traditional knowledge's legitimacy seemed to be hidden

under some arguments voiced by several non-Aboriginal individuals. They observed that knowing cultures is a two-way street, and while non-Aboriginal people have a responsibility to learn about Aboriginal culture, Aboriginal people should learn about the dominant western society. For example, the interviewee who cited an example about a nurse with a dog in her residence was adamant that when people from different cultures come from the outside, the people in the community must be made to understand that the community can have its beliefs but cannot impose them on outsiders. If this offends the community, the community should change. When probed on this issue, the interviewee spoke about the legal rights of the individual within the multicultural context of Canada, but refused to address the issue of weighing legal rights against the traditions and cultural mores of the community in question. The respondent did not mention possible tactics which might be employed to avoid such situations, such as cross-cultural training, or departmental policies synchronized with community standards.

Racial tension and the legacy of colonialism form the basis for the necessity of learning and effort on both sides to reach accommodation. Observing interviewees in Yellowknife and Inuvik highlighted the fact that not only colonial attitudes but the tangible effects of the colonial legacy persist in both places, and are drawn out during discussions about traditional knowledge. For example, can the loss of culture resulting from colonialism be restored? Are there resources available to do this? For many, barriers to using traditional knowledge stem from ignorance of cultural differences, and lack of respect for differences. It also results from the slow and painful process associated with reversing state-sanctioned, decades-old, subordinate-dominant cross-cultural relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal

people in the NWT.

View of Traditional Knowledge Policy

The Inuvik Regional Health Board (IRHB) and regional social service offices deliver programs and services for the Inuvik region. Officials interviewed possess intellectual awareness and understanding of traditional knowledge, along with personal experience as to how it might be used in program and service delivery. However, most have little knowledge of the policy or of any specific implementation measures. During interviews, several individuals stated they had never seen a copy of the policy and asked for a description of it. Programs using traditional knowledge were viewed as resulting from the department and the community working together spontaneously or in response to a need perceived by one of the two parties, not as a result of the traditional knowledge policy, and often in the absence of knowledge of the policy.

As in Yellowknife, it was observed that in the region there is no formal program of cultural orientation currently in place. Cultural awareness orientation training is delivered and offered on an ad hoc basis; some employees get it and some do not. Many interviewed saw this as a problem. According to some, among many employees knowledge of cultural differences does not always mean that differences are respected.

One distinct divergence in points of view was noted between frontline staff and management, with the exception of two senior managers, who were both Aboriginal. The management seemed to view Aboriginal people in the region as 'ready' to fit into the current system, and stressed the increasing ability of Aboriginal people to take on the current structures with the

potential for minor modifications. The front-line staff, however, largely long-term northerners or Aboriginal people themselves, emphasized the need for the system to change for a better fit with Aboriginal culture to occur.

Conclusion of Research Findings: Department of Health and Social Services

In contrast to the regional findings, officials in Yellowknife were well-informed of the policy, yet tended to focus on the difficulties of implementation at headquarters level and in programming. In Yellowknife, the policy is seen by many as a 'luxury', and knowledge limited to conceptual intellectual appreciation due to little practical everyday contact or experience with Aboriginal people and their culture. In contrast, employees in the regions knew little about the policy, and for the most part viewed it as positive but largely unnecessary. In the region, interviewees cited examples of traditional knowledge considerations impacting many decisions and programs out of common sense necessity. In both places, most respondents showed both an intellectual appreciation of the issue as well as a practical understanding of its implications. They tended to emphasize differences encountered from the lack of use of traditional knowledge.

For example, a social worker spoke about the need for flexible emergency assistance criteria. The social worker talked about cases in which emergency assistance should be structured to meet the needs of the person within their environment. By giving a person $50 to buy gas and nets, the person is able to set nets for fish to feed his family, share with relatives, and possibly sell to make some money. However, such simple solutions to

situations are often not allowed by the policies and procedures of government.

Department of Renewable Resources: Responsibilities and Organizational Structure

During 1995, the department of Renewable Resources was one of 14 Departments of the GNWT.[89] Its budget comprises 4.72 percent of GNWT expenditures, or approximately $48 million.[90] Although the department has operations in five regions outside of Yellowknife, most is spent at headquarters: approximately $37 million, or 77 percent of the budget is dedicated to headquarters operations and maintenance costs. Approximately $2.6 million, or about 3 percent of the budget is spent in the 12 communities of the Inuvik and Sahtu regions. [91]

The Department of Renewable Resources employs approximately 263 permanent full-time employees. Approximately 35 percent work at Headquarters in Yellowknife, 6 percent in the Yellowknife area, and 8 percent of the workforce is located in the Inuvik region.[92] The department has 11 full-time permanent positions throughout the five communities of the Sahtu, and 21 positions in the seven communities of the Inuvik region. Of these 32 positions, approximately 25 percent provide technical advice and assistance, 37.5 percent are Renewable Resource Officers (RROs) working directly with the people of the region, and the remaining 37.5 percent is divided equally between administrative and management positions.

The department has eight divisions, which are headquartered in Yellowknife. These include: the directorate; wildlife management; conservation education and resource development; policy and planning;

environmental protection; field operations; forest fire management; and forest management.[93] The eight regional or district offices are headed by superintendents reporting to the directorate. Through these operations, the department has a presence in the form of Renewable Resource officers in virtually every community in the NWT. The mandate of the department is

> to manage, regulate, and encourage the sustainable development of wildlife, forest resources and fish (in areas within the GNWT jurisdiction) in support of the renewable resource economy; to provide environmental management, assessment and protection measures; and to plan for land and water use...and to ensure that the interests of the GNWT and residents of the territories are represented in all renewable resource sectors.[94]

Within this context, the department seeks to achieve three goals, including that: "Renewable resources are managed using public input and scientific and indigenous knowledge." [95] The Department has the lead role in implementing the traditional knowledge policy, and is the only one of the 14 GNWT departments which mentions indigenous knowledge use as part of its goals.

Department of Renewable Resources: Headquarters
Procedural Considerations

The Department of Renewable Resources has responsibility for management and stewardship of renewable resource use to varying degrees, shared with Aboriginal organizations, and the federal government throughout the NWT. As a result, its programs and services are divided between regional and headquarters operations. At headquarters, policies, programs, and future directions are set. At regional level operations, programs and management measures are put in place. As a result of

working closely with local people to effect program implementation, the department involves local people to a large degree in its decisions and processes. Traditional Knowledge has been used by headquarters and front line staff for years, an inevitability due to the nature of the work.

Unlike most other departments, the Deputy Ministers and some senior management decision makers are Aboriginal, aware of traditional knowledge and proactive in this area.[96] This is critical for assisting in the promotion of traditional knowledge, which has been done with significant success.

Traditional ecological knowledge is accessible to staff by nature of the operations and moreover is necessary to carry out departmental responsibilities. The mandate requires extensive consultation and interaction with Aboriginal people at the local level. Scientists have also found that the use of local knowledge has been very beneficial to achieving objectives in terms of both practical and scientific aspects: communities' active involvement in management decisions results in increased cooperation in managing the resources, and local knowledge assists in increasing the accuracy of data.

In one instance, polar bears were tracked and counted to establish population levels for hunting quotas. Scientists working without community assistance tracked bears based on scientific estimates and their knowledge of the bear's range. Community hunters disputed the population estimates, arguing that the habitat range estimate was inaccurate. Working with local hunters, scientists realized their original assumptions had been incorrect and the population was far higher than had been estimated: they had simply been looking in the wrong places for the bears. Later, a satellite

collaring program showed that the bears, to which the scientists had ascribed a small ranging area, were in fact ranging as far away as Greenland, which had been the hunters' contention. [97]

Resources

At headquarters, program planning and major research projects are designed and carried out in close consultation with communities. As demonstrated by the example of polar bear population counts, much of this work necessitates the use of traditional knowledge. Management plans, hunting quotas, and research projects must be determined in cooperation with communities to ensure success, and many examples were provided by interviewees demonstrating the department's commitment to ensuring resources are used to maximum advantage.

Renewable Resources faces many of the same budgeting and resource pressures experienced by all government departments. While many individuals interviewed are committed to traditional knowledge use in their research and programs, determining the scope and degree of its incorporation in a given program is largely defined by the resources available for the project. Therefore, if a project can only be done successfully with significant involvement of Aboriginal hunters and trappers, the scope and extent of the project must be carefully determined to stay within allocated funding. This is complicated by the fact that partnerships with traditional knowledge holders to ensure traditional knowledge use means working closely with people who spend significant time out on the land. Bad weather, cultural traditions, conventions under specific circumstances, and other unpredictable variables may contribute to unforeseen cost overruns. However, cutting out the

traditional knowledge component of projects would effectively mean working without community input, which would render any results questionable at best, and useless at worst.

Departmental Culture and Philosophical Issues

Priority-Setting and Relationships With Aboriginal Organizations

Ongoing contact with communities necessitates monitoring and response capabilities in a variety of areas which assists the department in priority setting. The close relationship between the department and communities provides the opportunity for input on both an informal and formal basis. Aboriginal organizations, particularly co-management structures established under land claims such as co-management boards are consulted on a regular basis. Hunters and Trappers associations in each community are also a valuable resource for the department. In this way, regional operations are a particularly necessary link for determining the priority issues facing communities.

The regional operations are key to providing headquarters with road maps for interacting with the communities. For example, the use of Renewable Resources staff in Inuvik to carry out functions required by the Inuvialuit land claim provides for close links with the department and Inuvialuit resource management bodies in the region. Government representatives from the regions and headquarters also sit as members of co-management bodies established under land claims.

Philosophical Considerations

At headquarters, a range of views prevailed as to what traditional

knowledge is about. These ranged from technical knowledge about specific tasks gained through years of experience, to a way of life centered on the interconnectedness of the universe and place of the individual in relation to the rest of the world, with elders possessing a spirituality comparable to Zen Buddhists. Several people interviewed were scientists, trained in western scientific methods, who have also worked in the North for a number of years. The use of traditional knowledge in their work reflected largely their personal beliefs about the value of traditional knowledge either as a tool for gathering sound scientific information and ensuring community participation in projects, or as a legitimate complementary method of quantitative and qualitative inquiry. Several continue to struggle with its use and finding ways to use it in individual projects. In general, individuals' acceptance of traditional knowledge as compatible with western science seemed to show up in their work: individuals who had personally come to understand and respect the value of traditional knowledge to wider society promoted its use and acceptance by using it in their own work.

View of the Traditional Knowledge Policy

At headquarters, reaction to the traditional knowledge policy was mixed. Several people found flaws in it for its lack of substance and general nature. Others feel that it lacks specific direction on traditional knowledge use, which is left up to individual choice in most cases. While some thought it was worthwhile to build traditional knowledge awareness in government, many people said that the policy is too general and lacks the kind of solid direction necessary to produce significant changes among departments which do not already use traditional knowledge.

Department of Renewable Resources: Inuvik Region

Procedural Considerations

Programs gain legitimacy through local support and participation in implementation and design. Many officials recognize this as the only way resources may be effectively managed. Common sense and compatibility with local ways of doing things are primary considerations in many cases.

Given its mandate and responsibilities, the department literally could not function in the regions without maintaining a close relationship with resource users. Development and maintenance of this relationship is dependent upon community involvement and input at the decision making and procedural/implementation levels. There is a strong belief among many officials interviewed that resources can only be managed successfully through meaningful community involvement.

All interviewees raised the fact that land claim implementation has redefined credible resource management systems. Co-management boards created by land claim agreements have set the standard for self determination in the area of resource management. This allows for the creation of management regimes consisting of resource users and scientists, creating a pool of scientific and traditional knowledge in the decision-making process. Community control of, and responsibility for a credible system increases the legitimacy of the management regime through a cooperative effort toward shared goals. Several individuals observed that this demonstrated one of the key elements necessary to widespread use of traditional knowledge in government: community control over programs and services.

The settlement and implementation of land claims are key to establishing credible processes for Aboriginal participation in resource

management. Aboriginal participation often results in traditional knowledge being factored into decision processes. Those interviewed who had participated on co-management boards agreed that despite the mix of government and non-government representatives, no ulterior motives were brought into the management processes. Rather, the desire for effective management of animal populations and resources was the foremost consideration for all involved. Combining complementary areas of knowledge and expertise is the preferred method for resolving such problems.

As a result of the prevalent use of traditional knowledge in Renewable Resource programs and services in the region, many saw few barriers to its use within the department. At the same time, most recognize that traditional knowledge use in government is not an easy undertaking. Its nature is such that usage of the information itself requires continued community involvement and participation on an equal level. Equality of partnership is key to ensuring its effective linkage with western management practices and processes. Some respondents identified racist and colonialist attitudes. as a barrier to traditional knowledge use. However, other respondents felt that this was not necessarily motivated by racism; rather, fear of change was the culprit. This might also be compounded by a professional culture unwilling to accept non-western methods after using and believing in a different approach for most of their professional lives. In general, respondents believed that traditional knowledge use is essential for effective regional operations, and any resistance or avoidance of its use would be counter-productive to achieving the departments' goals and objectives.

According to one respondent:

> The old management system was a colonial system....Whites ruled according to their own agenda, not a community-based agenda. But the further away you are [physically] from a situation, the less you are able to direct it.[98]

Resources

For the regional operations and programs, use of traditional knowledge has been a long established process. For years, RRO's have used traditional knowledge in order to make the most cost effective use of available resources. This is in significant contrast to the headquarters operations, where interviewees, while recognizing its necessity within the department's programs, also viewed it as adding to the cost of some projects. The regional operation has responsibility for programs which by their nature involve working extensively with communities; to avoid interaction with communities would add to costs. Officials also had a very practical approach to the issue: if people are not a part of research, management planning, and setting quotas, they will simply do what they want, either through withholding their cooperation or raising concerns until the situation changes to their satisfaction. As resource users, they also have a vested interest in the sensible management of resources, and demand recognition of their expertise and knowledge through involvement in the process.

Departmental Culture and Philosophical Issues

Priority-Setting and Relationships With Aboriginal Organizations

Developments in the communities set priorities for regional operations. Regional operations carry out enforcement and program implementation. The very nature of their work demands close and

comfortable relations with Aboriginal organizations and communities. For example, if hunters are observing changes in animal behavior or populations which they think warrant attention, the department is responsible for responding to the concerns. The close relationship the department has developed with resources users also facilitates the free flow of information and input into decision making. One official from the region states that headquarters in Yellowknife sometimes does not understand the significance of this relationship:

> Headquarters has no idea what is going on. With land claims, the responsibility for management has shifted to the [co-management] boards and away from Yellowknife ... to a local management system.[99]

The department also administers programs such as the fur marketing program which support local hunters and trappers' pursuit of traditional hunting and trapping activities as a viable source of income.

Philosophical Considerations

Respondents' comments in the region emphasized the perception that traditional knowledge is not an abstract concept but rather a living breathing growing practical aspect of life. To define it as culturally bound knowledge would be to restrict its use and manipulation to those at the local level. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people interviewed recognize that the Aboriginal cultures of the region are in large part dying out. Despite this, many believe that traditional knowledge is worth preserving, and is often necessary or useful for the effective management of resources. For most respondents, traditional knowledge is not inaccessible or static in the sense that it is not open to criticism or critical evaluation. Rather, people can

discuss and examine it as they wish. While new technologies bring certain benefits, there are still important lessons to be learned from traditional ways of seeing the world or the methodologies that were part of the knowledge base.

The department emphasizes a common sense approach to research and management; this gains the support of the local people and makes it relevant to them. Many interviewees pointed out that western science has a quantitative focus and emphasis while traditional knowledge often emphasizes qualitative considerations, and that both of these are necessary to get a comprehensive picture of reality. Therefore, using traditional knowledge is a way to increase the scope of information, as well as the likelihood of getting quality information.

Working closely with communities has taught many government officials that neither traditional knowledge nor western science has the monopoly on being an infallible route to indisputable truth. In the same way that western scientists need to validate traditional knowledge with western science methods, Aboriginal people need to validate western science with traditional knowledge methods. Interviewees spoke of many examples where one type of knowledge was used to dispute the other, and to corroborate the other. For many people, this confirmed that both types of knowledge are valuable to understanding situations.

For example, in the early 1990s, users of the Peary caribou herd on Banks Island proposed to temporarily increase the hunting quota on the herd, which had been a steadily dwindling population. A quota had been determined with the participation of the community in order to maintain the population. Although the herd's numbers were stabilized, weather

conditions of freezing rain during September and October indicated to local people that based on their experience, many of the caribou were likely to die as a result of the hardships that these conditions occasioned. The hunters wanted to make use of the doomed caribou. They proposed to kill more than the allowed quota, as many animals were sure to die. Resistance to this plan in Yellowknife from caribou experts was based on scientific studies of the caribou herd. For the conservation experts, concern for adherence to principles of conservation of the herd far outweighed additional information provided by the local people based on their knowledge and experience.[100] From the hunter's point of view, many of the caribou were doomed to die of starvation anyway. To let these animals go to waste was an unreasonable proposition, since killing some at the time might mean that others would have a better chance of surviving if there was less competition for food.

View of the Traditional Knowledge Policy

The traditional knowledge policy was viewed with general cynicism by most respondents in the Inuvik area. Often it was referred to as a "Yellowknife policy" meant for guiding bureaucrats in Yellowknife commonly viewed as being out of touch with the regions. This initiative is thought to lack community participation and therefore legitimacy. For many of those interviewed, the policy is unnecessary and does not make a difference to how much or when traditional knowledge is used, or generally advancing its use in government.

While the traditional knowledge policy is not well known, traditional knowledge use in the region is extensive and processes through which it is linked with government programs continue to evolve. Most respondents

recognized that its use is also instructive for learning about what kinds of barriers to traditional knowledge exist. The example of the Peary caribou herd is one example of decision-makers being wedded to scientific principles, posing a barrier to creative resource management. In some instances prior to the introduction of the traditional knowledge policy, decision processes did not allow individuals to adapt decision making to the needs of specific situations. The policy at least provides for the possibility of taking adaptive measures.

In general, change must occur at the individual level. Bureaucrats and decision-makers must understand and accept traditional knowledge and start using it for the system to change, without understanding their own role in that process. Among those interviewed, many seem to assume that the system determines individual behavior, instead of individuals shaping the system. This raises a fundamental question about the origin and perpetuation of the bureaucratic culture.

While struggling with the issue of traditional knowledge use, there are also struggles going on between the headquarters and regional operations in determining the implementation of programs and policy. The core-periphery struggles are played out with headquarters operations being seen as the locus of non-Aboriginal-oriented decision making. According to many interviewees, efforts to address this issue through such measures as a traditional knowledge policy are seen as irritants and a waste of resources, which could be better used by communities simply becoming self-governing.

Aboriginal Organizations

Part of the mandate of all of these organizations is to promote and

enhance Aboriginal culture and knowledge towards the fulfillment of goals and responsibilities within their mandate or to contribute to larger organizations. Aboriginal organizations which participated in the research interviews included the Dene Nation, the Dene Cultural Institute, the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, the T'loondih Healing Camp, and the Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board.

The following are common elements arising out of conversations with members of Aboriginal organizations. In general, these organizations come from a perspective in which traditional knowledge systems equal or supersede western science in importance. Traditional knowledge is given high priority as an area of research and as a form of knowledge for decision making. Many struggle to fit western science and western-based institutional processes with traditional knowledge and Aboriginal customs. This Aboriginal-oriented perspective has primary consideration in their operations and processes.

For example, the T'loondih Healing Camp was established by the Gwich'in Tribal Council to fill the perceived gaps in the existing mental health and social services in the region. The communities recognized a need for holistic healing which was not a part of standard treatments. Designed by 30 Gwich'in, the facility is located near Fort McPherson. It houses a program focusing on family reconstruction rather than individual treatment. The method of treatment raises a number of issues which many western medical professionals would find difficult to accept, for example, including members of the same family in group therapy. As a result, its novelty and admittedly unconventional methods affect the levels of funding obtained by the organization. Its methods and procedures do not necessarily meet the

standards and criteria established by government.

Most organizations do not see the interlinkage of western science and traditional knowledge as an end in itself. Rather it is a process with broader goals which are political and social. These include community empowerment and community development spheres. For example, using traditional knowledge requires researching and recovering traditional knowledge, a process contributing to not only raising awareness about it, but also incorporating the training of Aboriginal people, particularly youth, in the skills and knowledge necessary for the gathering of the information. The Dene Cultural Institute (DCI) has found that this type of activity also raises fundamental issues underlying the loss of culture within communities. DCI understands that the loss of culture experienced by individuals, and entire communities, and the processes through which the loss of culture came about have contributed to most of the social problems prevalent in northern communities today. Confronting that history and coming to terms with societal and personal issues has been a prominent feature of the community based and community development oriented research approach taken by DCI. It has prompted thought and action necessary for people to come to terms with the relationship between cultural identity and wellness. The role of traditional knowledge in the development of communities and resources is emphasized and valued highly in communities.

Assessment of Policy

Most Aboriginal organizations view the traditional knowledge policy as ineffective as an instrument for achieving real change for a number of reasons. In terms of development of Aboriginal communities, government

administrative structures and processes are well placed to contribute to social, economic, and political development. From a western perspective, administration facilitates development in chiefly economic and secular spheres, not in social and political areas. For example, bureaucrats may often protest that changing the status quo is not up to them, instead they "are just doing their jobs according to the rules."

In general, Aboriginal organizations view the policy as a positive step but are cynical about its incorporation, since the GNWT is seen to serve the interests of primarily non-Aboriginal people. Officials at the Dene Nation hold fast to the belief that the GNWT is an illegitimate government, and attempts to become more culturally sensitive could only be effectively achieved if the GNWT surrendered power and resources to the Dene themselves. One person observed that establishing traditional knowledge use within the bureaucracy is also complicated by the transience of its staff. Hired from the South, and highly mobile, they seem a poor choice in building an institutional base experienced in and willing to use traditional knowledge.

Tensions exist within Aboriginal organizations between western science and traditional knowledge; but from the side opposite to that experienced by government. The dilemma is how to fit western science in with traditional knowledge, and how to work within a predetermined system structured, strengthened and maintained by the dominant society. Government's bureaucratic structure is one example. In Aboriginal organizations it might manifest as a group of traditional elders sitting in a board meeting puzzling over the restrictions and intricacies of Robert's Rules of Order.[101]

The goal of interlinking western science and traditional knowledge is

to promote and perpetuate an effective system created of complementary knowledge. The challenge is in seeking how to do this in a way acceptable to those unfamiliar with the two forms of knowledge.

Aboriginal organizations' views of the policy are in general agreement: the idea itself is not inherently bad and could ultimately be a worthwhile and important tool for achieving increased use of traditional knowledge in government. However, without any monitoring, evaluation, and implementation mechanisms in place, people are very skeptical as to what might be achieved. It was observed that none of its elements converge to create any kind of critical mass necessary to meaningful or systematic actions or programs.

Most respondents had heard of the policy vaguely, and some had been involved in its establishment. However, few had a good grasp of its content and purpose. Most people viewed the policy as owned wholly by government and outside their sphere of influence.

Assessment of Barriers to Traditional Knowledge Policy's Implementation

While it had been established by a working group and reviewed by elders, various perceived flaws in the policy's review process made people skeptical of its claim to be based on consultation. All respondents believe the policy's effectiveness is hampered by a lack of resources allocated to its implementation and enforcement. As it stands, it is up to the discretion of individuals and departments to follow its guidelines.

Many respondents commented that the policy's traditional ecological knowledge orientation implicitly circumscribes its application, and the degrees of its implementation in the bureaucracy. In the government's

response to the Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group, examples of traditional knowledge use relate specifically to renewable resources. The response and the policy do not provide examples of how the policy might be implemented, nor how departments might use knowledge of traditional practices to inform their planning. For example, traditional knowledge can be used in traditional health practices, in designing justice committee processes, or in designing houses with hard flooring in one room so people could avoid cutting up caribou on the kitchen linoleum. Officials do not always appreciate that incorporating traditional knowledge does not mean they must become experts in Aboriginal culture, but rather that they become knowledgeable as to how their programs could be best designed and delivered at the local level. Traditional knowledge is deeply rooted in land based cultures, but there are cultural practices which are not necessarily land-focused.

Finally, the policy creates a Catch-22 situation in which government demands traditional knowledge from Aboriginal organizations but does not devote resources to supporting traditional knowledge maintenance and development in a consistent or ongoing manner. Funding for traditional knowledge research is key to ensuring Aboriginal organizations have the resources to develop tools that would contribute to traditional knowledge use in government.

Dene Nation officials commented that the traditional knowledge policy is about how to better govern the Dene, while the Dene should be governing themselves. This comment was in many ways consistent with what government officials also observed: that programs and services were only successful if the local people had a meaningful role in the decision making

and/or implementation processes.

For Aboriginal organization respondents, traditional knowledge is about something beyond information -- it is a world view, using a knowledge base to revive a culture, and resurrect its vibrancy and independence. It also promotes skill-building in both worlds, thereby increasing self-reliance. There are far wider social, political, emotional, and spiritual implications beyond just sharing information. Traditional knowledge is knowledge inseparable from its context, which is often at odds with contemporary western science methods.

View of the Traditional Knowledge Policy Within Government Departments

It was found that in the regional offices of the Department of Health and Social Services, the traditional knowledge policy was not well known or understood, but it was universally viewed as a good idea, for various reasons.

Because of the region's land claims, people were generally aware of traditional knowledge and how it might be incorporated in programs and services on a day-to-day basis.

At the Inuvik offices of Renewable Resources, the policy was again, virtually unheard of, and some animosity toward Yellowknife-based initiatives made many people skeptical of its implementation. Many interviewees were surprised a policy existed, as traditional knowledge is used as a matter of course in the regions in virtually all programs and services. In the region, using traditional knowledge is a matter of common sense for most respondents, and the quickest route to achieving objectives. For example, local management of resources and lands is conducted on a co-management basis. Cooperation with First Nations organizations and individuals occurs

on a daily basis and is very positive.

In Yellowknife, while many officials are aware of the policy in both departments, and claimed that they try to use it where possible, it was not as prevalent or as easily accepted as in the regional offices in both departments. Many blamed lack of resources as a constraint factor. They viewed the incorporation of traditional knowledge as a "luxury", which should be pursued after basic programming is already in place.

However, accepting traditional knowledge as useful in program design and implementation was viewed differently by the two departments. For the Department of Health and Social Services, there are a myriad of "professional issues" and standards which have to be addressed in this area before meaningful progress may take place. In the predominant view, a balance must be struck between serving the goals of the department and doing it in a way relevant to the people it serves. For the Department of Renewable Resources, virtually all of the officials interviewed recognized the need for traditional knowledge use in government programs and services, and were surrounded with a long institutional history of traditional knowledge use, and examples of contemporary links between traditional knowledge and western science in departmental projects and programs. The goals of the department are shaped by the needs and perceptions of the people it serves.

And while traditional knowledge is used within the department for resource management purposes, this is not an accepted practice internationally. Renewable Resources officials pointed out that the issue arises in discussions over international wildlife management agreements, such as those for polar bears and whales, and international peer-refereed academic journals, which do not recognize traditional knowledge as a

legitimate source of information for use in scientific studies. In this way, some of the same "professional" issues crop up, but at the same time the department's leadership in traditional knowledge use has raised awareness of the issue internationally, and thus contributed to a change in thinking among some scientists.

The traditional knowledge policy provides a broad framework for the encouragement of traditional knowledge use in government programs and services. However, existing government institutional structures and processes and priorities complicate this task. In essence, many individuals in government view traditional knowledge as information which can be distilled into facts and methodologies, similar to western science. This western science-based interpretation of traditional knowledge is fundamentally at odds with the holistic nature of traditional knowledge, rooted in the cultural and spiritual beliefs of Aboriginal peoples.

Linkage of traditional knowledge with western science in government necessitates a fundamental change in government processes and procedures, facilitating equal partnerships between government and Aboriginal organizations in decision making and implementation. Some structures have been developed which can accommodate cooperation, such as co-management boards. Other processes and structures, such as western medical profession standards, have not been under sufficient direct pressure for change to take place.

Departmental priorities are determined by a matrix of factors, such as resource availability, responsibilities, and procedural rules. The value orientation of individuals in decision-making positions is also important in this area. In both departments, there seems to have been some success in the

implementation of the traditional knowledge policy. The ease with which traditional knowledge can be accommodated within existing institutional structures is a key determining factor, along with the acceptance of its use as the individual level. However, in both departments, more headway in implementation has been made in the regions than at headquarters.

Chapter Four

Introduction

The preceding discussion demonstrates many of the difficulties encountered in attempting to implement the traditional knowledge policy. The process of its creation and subsequent efforts toward implementation have served as vehicles for discussion about traditional knowledge in venues where it had hitherto been ignored. The traditional knowledge policy could accurately be described as stillborn rather than failed. At the same time, the work of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group preceding the policy's creation, and the sincere efforts of officials of the GNWT to implement the policy have not been in vain. The policy itself has been viewed with much skepticism by Aboriginal organizations, and objectives of the policy have not been fully achieved.

The traditional knowledge policy and discussions surrounding it have contributed to a greater awareness and promotion of traditional knowledge acceptance among government bureaucrats, resource developers, and the general public.[102] The value of this should not be underestimated. The efforts surrounding this initiative, in concert with other political and social developments during the last decade, have moved the traditional knowledge agenda forward. The focus of discussion has moved largely beyond justification of the validity of traditional knowledge, to determining how traditional knowledge can be used in non-Aboriginal processes and institutions.

Previous chapters detail processes leading up to the introduction of the

traditional knowledge policy, the historical political and socio-economic development of the NWT, and the use of traditional knowledge within two government departments. In this chapter, conclusions are presented based on the following questions:

1. Has the GNWT's traditional knowledge policy been implemented in the two departments in question, and to what extent?

2. What features of the two departments encourage or obstruct the policy's implementation, and to what extent?

The implementation of the policy in the two departments is assessed by looking at provisions of the traditional knowledge policy and the information indicating the scope and extent of its implementation. Variables correlating with different patterns of policy implementation are examined. Based on this information, factors which may obstruct or facilitate the policy's implementation are identified.

Implementation of the policy has been more successful in the Department of Renewable Resources than in the Department of Health and Social Services. This is the case not least of all due to Renewable Resources lead role in the policy implementation on a government-wide level. Institutional resources available for policy implementation at the Department of Renewable Resources are absent at the Department of Health and Social Services.

This chapter has four parts. The first looks at how and to what extent the policy has been implemented at the headquarters and regional levels in

the two departments. The second discusses how policy implementation correlated with existing facilitating and obstructing factors in the departments. The third looks at how the unique changes the policy requires of departmental philosophies and procedures fit with the colonial analysis of government administration and what this means for achieving culturally relevant governance in the NWT. The chapter concludes by presenting self-government expressed through Aboriginal government instead of public government as the only viable method for achieving the kinds of philosophical and administrative changes sought by the traditional knowledge policy.

Headquarters Implementation

Department of Renewable Resources

At headquarters in each department, there is a significant complement of scientific and professional staff responsible for determining program budget allocations, program design, policy formulation, and priority setting. Use of traditional knowledge differed in headquarters of each department.

Within the department of Renewable Resources, senior management has a tradition of promoting traditional knowledge use in resource management and associated activities such as research.[103] The nature of departmental responsibilities requires all program staff from field officers to scientists to work closely with communities and hunters and trappers associations. Imposition of quotas without prior community consultation or consideration of traditional hunting patterns and practices is useless. For example, it is well known that Aboriginal hunters hunted birds protected by the Migratory Birds Convention, an agreement between the United States and

Canada, well before its coming into force.[104] Aboriginal people have traditionally hunted several species of migratory birds, and solitary Renewable Resource officers in the field could or would do little to stop hunting practices in light of this reality.[105] Extensive experience with Aboriginal communities and working with resources users has sensitized Renewable Resources headquarters staff to the value and necessity of learning about and using traditional knowledge.

These factors contributed to the department's capacity to spearhead the policy's implementation. The policy emphasizes traditional knowledge use primarily in the natural environment and renewable resource management. It also directs the Department of Renewable Resources to coordinate its overall GNWT implementation. While the policy establishes traditional knowledge coordinator positions in each department, it does not explicitly recognize traditional knowledge use in other areas such as within social, health, and political systems.

Department of Health and Social Services

The previous chapter highlights constraints and challenges within the department of Health and Social Services which are absent from the array of variables affecting policy implementation in the Department of Renewable Resources. Most notable are federal and territorial statutory requirements affecting many programs and services. Statutory obligations render most program changes significant and subject to scrutiny whether administrative, or procedural. Associated resource requirements for meeting statutory obligations in accordance with accreditation and universal medical standards further complicate the situation. Due to the nature of the services, budgets

are unpredictable, and absorbing additional program costs for potentially uncertain results is unlikely to appeal to most staff and management.

The standards and resources issue also plagues movements towards accreditation and use of traditional medical practices. However, pilot projects using traditional knowledge have been undertaken in regions which do not fall under the scope of this study.[106] Independent programs such as the T'loondih Healing Camp, offering programs employing a mix of Aboriginal and western treatment methods, have received little support from the government, due in part to the "unconventional" methods being used, namely those incorporating traditional knowledge and Aboriginal cultural perspectives.[107]

While awareness of the traditional knowledge policy was prevalent at headquarters, most people interviewed felt that its use in specific programs and initiatives was seen as an add-on or less important factor than others. It appeared that traditional knowledge use is generally acceptable for use in prevention programs, but treatment remains as the preserve of non-Aboriginal medicine.

Attitudes toward traditional knowledge were informed by a perception that traditional knowledge use is a luxury. It was also perceived to add time and additional demands on a bureaucracy under pressure to increase performance in a climate of downsizing, and cost-cutting, creating an atmosphere inhospitable to change.

At the headquarters level, departmental activities are affected by the professionalized culture, lack of consistent contact with clients, and fiscally, the inability to provide sufficient support to ensure the participation of Aboriginal organizations in headquarters' initiatives.

One of the most prevalent reasons given for lack of implementation of the policy in both departments was the lack of a common understanding of traditional knowledge among GNWT staff. Some see it as knowledge of the local animals and environment or "local knowledge", others see it as technical expertise about certain species or resources, gained through experience, and others see it as a knowledge shaped by its local and cultural surroundings, including spiritual beliefs.[108]

In the Department of Health and Social Services, a significant issue is the lack of cross-cultural training of employees. New employees are at a serious disadvantage when designing and implementing initiatives affecting Aboriginal populations. This in turn is compounded by the lack of Aboriginal representation among the management and professional ranks within the department at the headquarters and regional levels. In general, this contributes to general ignorance of traditional knowledge as well as its cultural context.

Comparing Two Departments

The presence of certain variables correlated with difficulties in policy implementation. Some variables are particular to the nature of departmental services offered. For example, standards, both legal and professional, that are often complicating factors in, or barriers to traditional knowledge use in the Department of Health and Social Services, are not as widespread in the Department of Renewable Resources. Staff such as nurses and doctors are subject to professional association standards, and federal and territorial legislation in their performance of duty. The same kinds of complications arise in areas governed by external and internal policies limiting potential

action, such as federal funding criteria and reporting requirements for programs. Related to this is a prevalent professionalized culture within the bureaucracies, which promotes preservation of western university-based training, fosters resistance to changing the status quo, and promotes and expands its importance.

Another group of variables related to knowledge of the culture and people who have traditional knowledge; these were found throughout both departments. In headquarters, most of the staff cannot often go out on the land or have face-to-face contact with traditional knowledge holders. As a result, some bureaucrats do not have the opportunity to gain meaningful first-hand experience of traditional knowledge and many would not know where to start. The nature of the work at headquarters necessitates interaction within the ranks of professional staff. So, while employees may be interested and open to learning about traditional knowledge, learning opportunities may be rare. This is particularly difficult if management does not actively advocate traditional knowledge use. Resource constraints further contribute to this by restricting professional development opportunities to narrow technical areas rather than providing opportunities to learn more about traditional knowledge in innovative ways, or through cross cultural training.

Use of traditional knowledge at the headquarters level was more prevalent in the Department of Renewable Resources than at the Department of Health and Social Services. Both departments had traditional knowledge coordinators. As well, the Department of Health had a newly created traditional health and healing consultant position focused on promoting the incorporation of traditional health practices and culturally appropriate health

models into existing programs. Notable initiatives included new Aboriginal custom adoption legislation and the community wellness strategy. At the same time, a suicide prevention curriculum was under attack by outside agencies for failing to incorporate a sufficiently culture-based approach. In the Department of Health and Social Services, traditional health and healing practices were not actively promoted, though attempts are made to accommodate specific requests for such services, and no funding was devoted to research in this area. The only culturally based healing center in the NWT (T'loondih Healing Camp) was receiving little GNWT support despite high demand for its unique program from across the country.

Traditional knowledge use and its promotion is part of the Department of Renewable Resources stated objectives.[109] In Renewable Resources, the program and scientific staff's constant contact with communities and consultative processes rendered traditional knowledge use widespread. This orientation is prompted by significant political will and senior management encouragement of traditional knowledge use, which was absent in the Department of Health and Social Services.

Regional Implementation

In both departments, use of traditional knowledge in the Inuvik region is more prevalent than at headquarters in Yellowknife. At the local level, bureaucrats responsible for program implementation receive direct feedback from clients; they are aware of problems with program implementation. Front-line bureaucrats have some discretionary powers over program and policy implementation. The separation between regional operations and headquarters means that not all activities are carried out "by the book" but

rather may vary according to the situation at hand. For example, Renewable Resource Officers may not report some offenses under certain circumstances in order to maintain good relations or when faced with a situation for which rules seem unreasonable.[110] This kind of discretionary power has been seminal to creating a regional bureaucracy sympathetic and cognizant of community needs and aspirations.

At the same time, in both departments there was little knowledge of the traditional knowledge policy and it was viewed as a "Yellowknife initiative". Among Renewable Resources staff, it was viewed as unnecessary. Among staff at Health and Social Services, it was viewed as a much needed first step in bureaucratic change, particularly for professional staff who often are in favour of the status quo, due to insufficient information about how current practices might be linked with traditional knowledge.

In the region, dealing with Aboriginal people in a community context on an everyday basis has an impact on program and service delivery. In both departments, examples of widespread traditional knowledge use appeared in a variety of forms, such as including traditional foods on hospital menus, seeking advice from trappers about river levels for water travel, bringing band councils up to date on social assistance and child apprehension cases, and using traditional knowledge on an equal basis with scientific information in setting hunting quotas.

Where the departments diverged related to internal resource availability, statutory responsibilities and bureaucratic cultures. Demographics also play a role. For example, cross cultural training of community nurses is the responsibility of health board representatives on an ad hoc basis. It is not monitored; there are no resources dedicated to ensuring

consistent or standardized cross-cultural training. Whereas in Renewable Resources, knowledge of the land-based activities and resources users' cultures is essential to perform jobs in the field and conduct research effectively. Land claim provisions carried out by the Department of Renewable Resources also created a formal resource pool to promote the inclusion of traditional knowledge in research, resource management decision making, and programs.

Demographics also play a role. Front-line workers and managers who are Aboriginal are in favour of using traditional knowledge. Far more employees are Aboriginal at the regional level than at headquarters.[111]

Department of Renewable Resources

Significant initiatives and day-to-day management of resources involve constant community consultation and interaction between the staff and the resource users and stakeholders. This active leadership in traditional knowledge use has promoted widespread use among professional staff. Its use in projects ranges from logistical activities such as plotting travel routes, to determining how caribou and other animals should be handled when tagging them for research purposes.

Renewable resource use is one area where traditional practices are very much alive. Some people argue that while other aspects of the culture, such as language, have been lost, hunting and trapping traditions remain vibrant and important for everyday life in some communities. This is a significant factor in promoting accessibility and acceptance of traditional knowledge by scientists and the bureaucracy. Unlike some aspects of traditional culture, traditional knowledge about renewable resources is widely used among

Aboriginal people. This adds to its credibility. This is also a clue as to why there is a significant difference in traditional knowledge use between the two departments in question.

For example, intricate medical knowledge is often well beyond the technical expertise of people without university education, and there are very few practicing medicine people or people with extensive knowledge of traditional medicine. The opposite is true in the field of resources use and management; there are many people with high levels of expertise in resources and management, on a regional and species level. Resource users bring extensive experience to bear when discussing resource use and management issues. In comparison, the numbers of people who can remember or who actively practice traditional methods of medicine are few. While some effort has been made to revitalize and recapture this knowledge,[112] its sheer disuse and small numbers of practicing traditional healers have meant it is an area with a lower profile than renewable resources. Traditional knowledge about renewable resource issues outstrip the public profile of traditional medicine practices for another reason; namely the centrality of land use and ownership issues to land claim negotiation and settlement processes.

Land claims have changed how resources are managed. The Inuvialuit and Gwich'in claims established management boards based on the principle of shared government/Aboriginal management of resources, with legal authority rooted in the land claims. This results in Aboriginal people having significant influence over management processes and decisions, and in the use of traditional knowledge in research and decision processes. Land claims have facilitated traditional knowledge use in government because the

representatives of claimant groups bring it to the decision-making table within co-management and other institutions. Funding to implement claim-mandated activities have in some cases been channelled through the government, increasing departmental institutional knowledge and expertise in using traditional knowledge.[113]

Department of Health and Social Services

Issues of professionalization related to western standards complicated traditional knowledge use in the Department of Health and Social Services. Traditional medical knowledge is not widespread among medical staff and no formal programs or processes exist encouraging acquisition of the knowledge, through cross-cultural programs and training. The use of the community health representatives serves a dual function: to promote community and Aboriginal knowledge of health issues and to act as a buffer ensuring patients understand western services. While these individuals assist in orienting medical staff to the community and local culture, their role is restricted in that most cases their formal duties are to act as a liaison between the health care workers and community, and lack the bureaucratic status, training, and/or authority to promote increased knowledge of traditional medical practices among health professionals.

In the region, most respondents felt that using traditional knowledge in programs and services was not only important, but almost unavoidable at the regional level. They also pointed out that resources to do this were available within the community, including elders, band councils, and Aboriginal organizations. The settlement of land claims is seen as a fundamentally important factor in securing local control of programs and

services and for shaping these to fit with local Aboriginal cultures. Toward this end, many contrasted new developments with the prevalent lack of cross-cultural training, which has always been a significant concern in the region, particularly in the smaller communities.

Conditions and Factors Contributing to Traditional Knowledge Use: Comparing Two Departments

Facilitating Factors: Headquarters

The Department of Renewable Resources has been more successful than Health in department-wide implementation of the policy, including traditional knowledge in areas such as research, program development, resource management, internal decision-making structures, and evaluation. In the Department of Health and Social Services, it is used primarily in program delivery at the regional level. These results correlate with the different facilitating and obstructing factors found in each department.

Given the history of significant use of traditional knowledge in the Department of Renewable Resources, its role as the lead department of the traditional knowledge policy seems natural. This role also raises the profile of traditional knowledge within the department itself. Departmental management's proactive traditional knowledge use allows for its innovative and extensive use in programs and services. Program and scientific staff have a long history of using traditional knowledge to their benefit and the benefit of the department. This promotes its continuing and innovative use. The collective experience creates a pool of institutional knowledge and experience available to staff throughout the department. As a result of this history, many employees view traditional knowledge use as one method of efficient

and effective use of resources and performance of duties. Therefore, projects often include resources for traditional knowledge use, either as community consultation, interviews with elders and resource users, or community involvement. This is facilitated by the nature of the department's work. It involves a high degree of interaction between departmental employees and traditional knowledge holders.

The department of Health and Social Services delivers programs and services which have not historically experienced high levels of community involvement and traditional knowledge use. The existence of the traditional knowledge policy and the increasing profile of traditional knowledge has resulted in some traditional knowledge use within the department. The department's lead role in the development of the community wellness strategy is one example, along with the establishment of the position of traditional health and healing coordinator. In some areas, the department has launched pilot projects and has altered programs to increase community involvement and control, for example the Inuvik region's Mental Health Pilot Project. This has been complemented by the department's conscious efforts to train and utilize local people as staff, such as CHRs and through the northern nursing program, and through community representation on regional health boards.

Such efforts facilitate traditional knowledge use in the department. Comparing aspects of each department contributing to policy implementation uncovers common variables which can be classed as facilitating factors in policy implementation. Sufficient and specifically identified resources are key to facilitating traditional knowledge use. Political will at the ministerial level and leadership within the ranks of departmental management are also key

factors. These contribute to the development of resources and initiatives within departments, such as the dedication of staff to traditional knowledge initiatives, new and innovative uses of traditional knowledge, and establishing an experience and knowledge base of working with traditional knowledge among program and professional staff. Perhaps most importantly, it contributes to local control of programs and services, including the establishment of program focus and delivery method at the local level.

Obstructing Factors: Headquarters

Despite the forward thinking and extensive use of traditional knowledge in the Department of Renewable Resources, factors obstructing traditional knowledge use are evident. In general these are tied mostly to the administration's western philosophical and structural basis. Lack of understanding of Aboriginal culture and traditional knowledge was identified by many respondents as a key obstacle to traditional knowledge use. Difficulty using traditional knowledge tended to arise in situations involving outside agencies or individuals are involved in departmental projects, such as other departments, governments, and universities unaccustomed to using traditional knowledge. Some individuals' preference to rely solely on western professional training and methods of inquiry posed obstacles to traditional knowledge use. Sometimes individuals are not keen to venture into what they see as essentially uncharted and untested territory, or may not know where to start.

In the Department of Health and Social Services, the prevalent professional culture and the prevalence of universal standards and obligations in most areas were primary barriers to change. The scarcity of

resources in general was also seen as a major barrier, since the nature of the programs is such that any change would require significant resources for preparation, implementation, monitoring, and adjustment. Historically, traditional knowledge has not been used in departmental initiatives. As a result, there is little institutional or individual expertise and experience on which to draw.

Obstacles related also to the sheer lack of an Aboriginal presence in management and the ranks of professional staff. Lack of awareness and understanding of Aboriginal culture at this level also poses difficulties, particularly in decision-making processes. Despite these obstacles, cross-cultural training was next to non-existent among all staff.

Significant barriers related to resources, and lack of understanding and awareness among front-line and management employees. In many cases, this was not a function of resistance to traditional knowledge at the individual level, but rather a system with a philosophical basis and specialized nature that does not accommodate its inclusion.

Facilitating Factors: Inuvik Region

In both departments, traditional knowledge use is more apparent in the regions than at headquarters. To understand this, commonalities are looked at which facilitate this similar implementation patterns.

In both regions, the operations have significant and constant daily contact with Aboriginal people. The area's population is majority Aboriginal, and the region itself is the home of two settled land claims. This has increased the involvement and influence of Aboriginal people in decision making.

Front-line workers and management are able to monitor and evaluate program implementation on an ongoing basis at the regional level, and can act quickly to seek or make changes to respond to the local situation. Their knowledge of the specific circumstances and needs of the community and close links to the people as a natural result of living there assist in ensuring that consultation with and feedback from all client groups occurs. Their location and knowledge of the local environment assists with day-to-day tasks and long-term planning.

Obstructing Factors: Inuvik Region

Ultimately, the regional operations must follow territorial policies and guidelines set for the entire department, and report back to Yellowknife on the progress which has been made. The centralization of control in Yellowknife is a source of frustration for regional officials. Many officials and Aboriginal groups perceive the Yellowknife bureaucracy as at best well-meaning but out of touch with what is happening at the regional level, and at worst, arrogant and controlling. Lack of full local control of programs and services is seen as an important factor in preventing the policy's implementation.

Within the Department of Health and Social services, high staff turnover, lack of cross-cultural training, and low numbers of Aboriginal employees were perceived as contributing to the slow implementation of the policy. The inability of regional operations to provide resources for implementation to address such problems is also a contributing factor. Centralization of decision making in Yellowknife, the inability of officials to determine resource allocation at the local level, and lack of local control over

program design, evaluation, and implementation were viewed as major barriers to traditional knowledge use in both departments.

Understanding Bureaucratic Resistance to Change

Colonialism

The character of the NWT administration cannot be separated from the influence of colonialism, under which it was established. During the research for this study, respondents identified systemic reasons for the slow pace of change in the bureaucracy. Bigger than any one individual, many people felt that the only real change could occur when the system did, for example, through self-government or through wholly Aboriginal designed and staffed bureaucracies.

Peter Puxley addressed this issue briefly in his submission to the Berger inquiry. For him colonialism is

> the pattern of relationships within the bureaucracies in general. It is in the nature of colonialism to reward those who show a readiness to subsume their own true interest, that is, the development of themselves as autonomous creative human beings, to the requirements of an external purpose. Those who give up the discovery in their human potency in exchange for security and the vicarious sharing in the power of the bureaucracy itself, whatever purpose it serves.[114]

Within the bureaucracy, officials serve the purpose of the organization through policy implementation; their loyalty is to the office they occupy and their superiors. Being a part of the larger organization is reinforced by the bureaucratic culture, which reinforces the rule-oriented and highly rational structure upon which the functioning of the bureaucracy depends. Perhaps many individuals working in concert, devoted to using traditional

knowledge within the bureaucracy could effect change. But ultimately, the kinds of change needed within the administration would require significant funding and attention. These are changes which would require political will at the ministerial level, a situation unlikely to occur particularly in the current situation of cutbacks and fiscal restraint.

At the same time, the bureaucracy is perceived to be well insulated from the realities of the larger society, a safe haven from the kinds of cultural clashes and developmental changes swirling on the outside.

The perceived need for the traditional knowledge policy arises from the need for culturally appropriate or indigenous governance. The traditional knowledge policy seeks arguably radical change to accommodate this need. The potential for the current monolithic system to undergo radical change is slim. One road out of this dilemma is through self-government for Aboriginal people.

Change Through Self Government

Assessing the use of traditional knowledge in the Departments of Health and Social Services and Renewable Resources provided the opportunity to look at two departments with very different characteristics, which cover the diversity of departments found throughout government. Even at the Department of Renewable Resources, which has a long institutional history of using traditional knowledge, it was found that it is sometimes difficult for the traditional knowledge policy to be implemented. Any department such as Health and Social Services, characterized by a high complement of professional staff trained in southern universities such as lawyers, doctors, nurses, and engineers, for example, would find it difficult to

use traditional knowledge.

The status quo might be the price of a bureaucracy which does not fit with the society it must serve. This means living with the resulting illegitimacy, and/or attempting to address the situation through measures such as the traditional knowledge policy. Alternatively, one may be willing to accept the current difficulties with traditional knowledge use in the public government system as simply one of the costs of development. How long this situation would last would depend on the success of measures to right the situation, changes occurring in the society which would eventually trickle into the administration thereby changing it, and the willingness of bureaucrats to seek change to better understand and address the needs of the society they serve.

The traditional knowledge policy aspires to promoting an Aboriginal government administration model within a public government. However, a study of two GNWT departments indicates that is untenable. At the time of its creation, and during the subsequent 25 years of operation, governing institutions in the NWT were mainly the province of the GNWT alone. Settlement of land claims has changed the situation: Aboriginal administrations and governing institutions have been created under land claims agreements, which have the legal, financial, and political resources and support to create Aboriginal administrations. They also have the authority to tailor the administrative and decision-making processes to local Aboriginal cultures. Given its large scope of authority and well established non-Aboriginal public administration, the GNWT could not reasonably be expected to undergo a similar fundamental transformation through the implementation of one policy or through a series of policy initiatives

combined. Fundamentally, the GNWT is a non-Aboriginal administration.

Since the GNWT administration is a western bureaucracy functioning in a society it does not fit, self-government would allow for a western bureaucracy for non-Aboriginal people, and a bureaucracy based on Aboriginal culture and incorporating western characteristics for Aboriginal governments. The lack of wide-scale policy implementation in the GNWT, and the identification of prevalent factors obstructing traditional knowledge use in the bureaucracy indicates that it would not really be possible to express self-government through a public government system. The traditional knowledge policy introduces a range of difficulties of evolving a bureaucratic type that meets the needs of Aboriginal bureaucracy. The results are natural tensions arising from transition of a western bureaucracy to an Aboriginal one, accommodating both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural bases.

Expression of self government would require a bureaucracy which would have to be consistent with the needs, philosophies, cultural perspectives, and aspirations of the client groups. At a territorial level, the sheer cultural diversity would render this difficult at best. The differentiated system currently in place contains inherent obstacles to change which would make the accommodation of self government provisions a fundamental challenge.

If attempted, this kind of expression of self-government would have to go beyond the payoffs that result from a traditional knowledge policy. For example, the handling of the traditional knowledge policy argues strongly for Aboriginal self-government as the GNWT is unable, philosophically (or structurally) to come to terms with traditional knowledge except for areas and situations that are most conducive or easiest to incorporate it. Self-

government expressed through public government would require an administrative structure based on Aboriginal philosophical and cultural outlooks from the start, in order to ensure its pervasive influence throughout. Once established, changes would be extremely costly and difficult.

The present bureaucracy cannot serve the NWT population well or legitimately under its present structure and orientation. The government draws most of its expertise from the dominant non-Aboriginal culture. This results in a professional socialization and culture which is self perpetuating within the bureaucracy. In the Weberian model of rationalized bureaucracy, there are well established hierarchical control and accountability structures which dominate within the bureaucracy. The use of traditional knowledge demands that decisions usually made within bureaucratic structures instead take place where traditional knowledge is operational -- at the community level. Western bureaucratic structures cannot easily accommodate that kind of fundamental change. Consequently, if the bureaucracy will not change then the politics and government must change toward self-government to effectively meet existing needs.

Footnotes

1 From minutes of a meeting held at Fort Providence, NWT, October 1993, for Elders to review the GNWT Traditional Knowledge Policy.

2 Mark Dickerson, Whose North?, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992) p. 28

3 *Ibid.*, 29

4 *Ibid.*, 30

5 *Ibid.*, 59

6 *Ibid.*, 87

7 Keith and Neufeld, "Northern Resources Planning and Management: Perspectives on Community Self Determination", in Dacks, G., and K. Coates, Northern Communities: The Prospects for Empowerment,(Edmonton: Boreal Institute for Northern Studies, 1988) p. 91

8 *Ibid.*, 91

9 *Ibid.*, 91

10 In fact, the first draft western constitutional proposal, Partners in a New Beginning has done precisely that, favoring one of three models which places primary emphasis on the guaranteed representation for Aboriginal people as a form of expressing the inherent right of self government through a public government system.

11 Allice Legat, ed., Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group, (Yellowknife: Department of Culture and Communications, 1991) p.2

12 *Ibid.*, 9

13 Harvey Feit, "Self- Management and State Management: Forms of Knowing and Managing Northern Wildlife", in Freeman, Milton, and Ludwig Carbyn, (eds.) Traditional Knowledge and Renewable Resources Management,(Edmonton: Boreal Institute for Northern Studies, 1988) p. 72

14 Ellen Bielawski, "Anthropological Observations on Science in the North: The Role of the Scientist in Human Development in the Northwest Territories", Arctic, March 1984.

15 Debbie DeLancey, "Research in Northern Remote Areas - The Native Experience", Lectures in Community Medicine #4, Memorial University, NF, November 1984. Unpublished. 11

16 Interviews with officials at Department of Renewable Resources, GNWT, Yellowknife, NT.

17 Debbie DeLancey, *Op. Cit.*, 1

18 Ellen Bielawski, *Op. Cit.*, 4

19 Harvey Feit, *Op. Cit.*, 73

20 Allice Legat, *Op. Cit.*, 9

21 John Sallenave, "Giving Traditional Ecological Knowledge its rightful place in environmental assessment", Northern Perspectives, Vol.22, No. 1, Spring 1994. 19

22 The Gwich'in, Sahtu, and Inuvialuit land claim agreements provide for settlement lands to be administered by the Aboriginal organization. Access to settlement lands and specific communities are subject to a variety of screening processes.

23 Interview with original *ad hoc* working group member.

24 Mark Dickerson, *Op. Cit.*, 190; S. Hume in William Wonders, (ed), Knowing the North: Reflections on Traditions, Technology, and Science, (Edmonton: Boreal Institute for Northern Studies, 1988) p. 104

25 Interview with Aboriginal organization member of the *ad hoc* working group.

26 Allice Legat, *Op. Cit.*, 1

27 Interviews with *ad hoc* group members indicated that Metis elders did not feel that they were sufficiently prepared to take part in the meetings of the TKWG as they had not received relevant information before attending the first elders meeting.

28 Allice Legat, *Op. Cit.*. 113

29 *Ibid.*, 114

30 Interview with *ad hoc* working group member.

31 Based on discussions with *ad hoc* working group members.

32 Based on discussions with *ad hoc* working group members.

33 Allice Legat, *Op. Cit.*, 3

34 *Ibid.*, 2

35 *Ibid.*, 3

36 Based on interviews with *ad hoc* group members.

37 GNWT Response to the Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group, (Yellowknife: Department of Renewable Resources, 1993) p. 3

38 May 01, 1992 letter from Dene Cultural Institute to all MLA's Re: Report of Traditional Knowledge Working Group.

39 NWT Hansard, June 23, 1992. 2709

40 NWT Hansard, June 25, 1992. p. 2746

41 Department of Renewable Resources, *Op. Cit.*, p. 14

42 *Ibid.*, 13

43 *Ibid.*, 13

44 Comments and recommendations for departmental TK initiatives, Fort Providence Elders Gathering, October 1993.

45 Letter to Government Leader from DCI, February 24, 1994. p.1

46 *Ibid.*,2

47 Department of Renewable Resources, *Op. Cit.*,p. 6 et passim

48 Based on interview with *ad hoc* working group member.

49 D. Johnson, "On Oppressed Classes", 1972, 277, in Kay, Cristobal, ed., Latin American Theories of Development and Underdevelopment,(London: Routledge, 1989)p. 66

50 See Kenneth Coates, Canada's Colonies: A History of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, (Toronto: Lorimer, 1985)

51 GATTFLY, "Colonial Patters of Resource Development", in We Stand on Guard for Whom?,(Toronto: GATTFLY, 1985)

52 *Ibid.*, 13

53 Environmental Assessment Review Panel hearings into the proposed BHP diamond mine development at Lac DeGras, NT; January to February 1996.

54 Asch, Michael, Home and Native Land, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992)p. 42

55 Kenneth Coates, *Op. Cit.*, 1985

56 Michael Asch, "The Economics of Dene Self Determination", in Turner, David, and Gavin Smith, (eds), Challenging Anthropology, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill 1979) p. 346

57 Coates, Kenneth, *Op. Cit.*, , p.201

58 Michael Asch , in Mel Watkins, ed., Dene Nation: The Colony Within, (Toronto:

University of Toronto, 1977) 55

59 Andrew Janos, Politics and Paradigms: Changing Theories of Change in Political Science, (Stanford: Stanford University Press,1986)p. 31

60 Philip Blake, "Statement to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry", in Mel Watkins, ed., Dene Nation: The Colony Within, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977. 5-9

61 Dene National Office, Dene Government Past and Future, (Yellowknife: Dene Nation, No date) p. 21

62 Asch, *Op. Cit.*, 1977; and in Mel Watkins, *Op. Cit.*, 1977.

63 Max Weber, Economy and Society, trans. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, (Berkeley: University of California, 1978) pp. 63-212

64 Joseph LaPalombara, "Notes, Queries, and Dilemmas", Bureaucracy and Political Development, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963) p.49

65 See GNWT Affirmative Action Policy.

66 Fred Riggs, Administration in Developing Countries - The Theory of Prismatic Society, (Boston:Houghton Mifflin, 1964)

67 Joseph La Palombara, *Op. Cit.*, p. 49

68 This study looks only at public administration which should not be confused with First Nations administrations. However, finding accommodation within public government at the bureaucratic level may be instructive for First Nation/Public administrations.

69 Mark Dickerson , *Op. Cit.* 87

70 Kirk Cameron, and Graham White, Northern Governments in Transition, (Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1995) p. 57

71 *Ibid.*, p.57

72 GNWT Department of Personnel, GHRS Report 367, December 1992.

73 Anthony Downs, Inside Bureaucracy ,(Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1967) p. 30

74 Wolfe, et. al., as noted on p.9 of Martha Johnson, (ed) Lore: Capturing Traditional Environmental Knowledge, (Ottawa:Dene Cultural Institute and the International Development Research Centre, 1992)p.9

75 Martha Johnson, *Op. Cit.* p.7

76 Dene Cultural Institute Quarterly, July 1994, Vol. 2, No. 3.

77 Joseph La Palombara, *Op. Cit.* 50

78 Dene Cultural Institute Quarterly, July 1994. 5

79 Anthony Downs, *Op. Cit.* 30

80 *Ibid.* 40

81 *Ibid.* 40

82 Ellen Bielawski, Ellen, "Cross Cultural Epistemology: Cultural Adaptation Through the Pursuit of Knowledge", publication information unknown, p. 60. See pp. 17-18 of this thesis.

83 This assumption is based on profiles of those interviewed during the research stage of this study, see methodology section for detail.

84 GNWT Department of Public Works and Services, 1995-96 Main Estimates, (Yellowknife: GNWT, 1995)

85 France Benoit, France, ed., Working Together for Community Wellness: A Directions Document, (Yellowknife: GNWT Health, 1995) The community wellness initiative is

basically a plan for management of healing services in the NWT which promotes community control and involvement in delivery of services and emphasis on programs and focusing of funding in areas tailored to the community's needs in a way which fits with community needs. The plan contains a strong pro-traditional knowledge perspective.

86 Since this research was undertaken, the department has undergone reorganization and downsizing measures, resulting in a small decrease in staff, particularly at headquarters in Yellowknife. Both the Deputy Minister and Minister of the Department changed after the October 1995 election.

87 Source: 1995-96 Main Estimates, GNWT, p.12-27. Also, see diagram 2.1, "Northwest Territories Health Care System", attached as Figure 1.

88 Interview with IRHB employee.

89 Research for this study was completed during May and June of 1995; since that time, the GNWT has amalgamated several departments and privatized some government s services. The changes included an amalgamation of the departments of renewable resources, Energy, Mines, and Petroleum Resources, and Economic Development and Tourism, which took effect during late 1996.

90 1995-96 Main Estimates, vii.

91 According to the Main Estimates, the Sahtu is not a distinct region for accounting purposes. However, for departmental purposes, the two regions are distinct.

92 Based on information provided by departmental officials during May 1995; internal directory phone list dated February 07, 1995. These numbers reflect only full time permanent staff positions. This conflicts with required estimates of 269.2 person year requirements as listed in the 1995-96 Main Estimates.

93 See 1995-96 Main Estimates, Departmental Overview, "Accounting Structure Chart", p.10-2.

94 *Ibid*, p.10-3.

95 *Ibid.*, 10-3

96 The department has a tradition of deputy ministers dedicated to the use and promotion of traditional knowledge, such as the late Jim Bourque, Joe Handley, and senior staff and advisors.

97 Interview with official at headquarters, Department of Renewable Resources.

98 Interview with official from Department of Renewable Resources, Inuvik.

99 Interview with official from Department of Renewable Resources, Inuvik.

100 Interview with regional representative of Department of Renewable Resources.

101 Interview with cultural institute representative.

102 Multidepartmental cooperation on the community wellness strategy which involves a strong traditional knowledge and Aboriginal cultural component or orientation to the strategy is one example; another example is the inclusion of traditional knowledge in various stages and aspects of the environmental assessment review process public hearings for the BHP Diamonds project during January and February 1996.

103 Interviews with departmental officials at headquarters and in the regional office.

104 The Migratory Birds Convention is an agreement between the United States and Canada which aims to protect from hunters various species of migratory birds; hunting is allowed only during specific times of the year. Recently, this agreement has been

amended to reflect the realities of resources use of the species the agreement aims to protect.

105 Personal conversation with Jim Bourque of Bourque's Consulting, former Deputy Minister of Renewable Resources.

106 The Rankin Inlet Birthing Project began in November 1993 an attempt to return to traditional midwifery practices; a traditional health practices workshop was convened during February 1995, bringing together physicians and traditional healers from throughout the NWT for four days; and a moose cookbook developed by nutritionists and the community of Fort Liard was underway during 1995. A total of twelve activities were identified by the Department of Health during 1995 as utilizing traditional knowledge, according to a report submitted to the Renewable Resources' traditional knowledge coordinator by the Department of Health's traditional knowledge coordinator.

107 Based on interview with representative.

108 During interviews, respondents were asked specifically what they thought traditional knowledge was. All of the answers received fit into one of the three basic categories outlined here.

109 GNWT, 1995-96 Main Estimates, p.10-3.

110 The Dene Cultural Institute completed the Dene Medicine Project, an inventory and description of traditional medicines and healing methods of Dene in one NWT community.

111 Parts of the renewable resource work mandated by the Inuvialuit land claim was performed by staff at GNWT Renewable Resources in Inuvik.

112 Migratory Birds Act, for example.

113 Barbara Guy, Employment Equity in GNWT Headquarters and GNWT Western Regional Positions, (Yellowknife: Department of Education, Culture and Employment, May 1996). According to the statistics, only 21% of positions at headquarters are filled by Aboriginal staff, while 44.5% of staff are Aboriginal in the regional operations.

114 Mel Watkins, ed., *Op. Cit.* p.112

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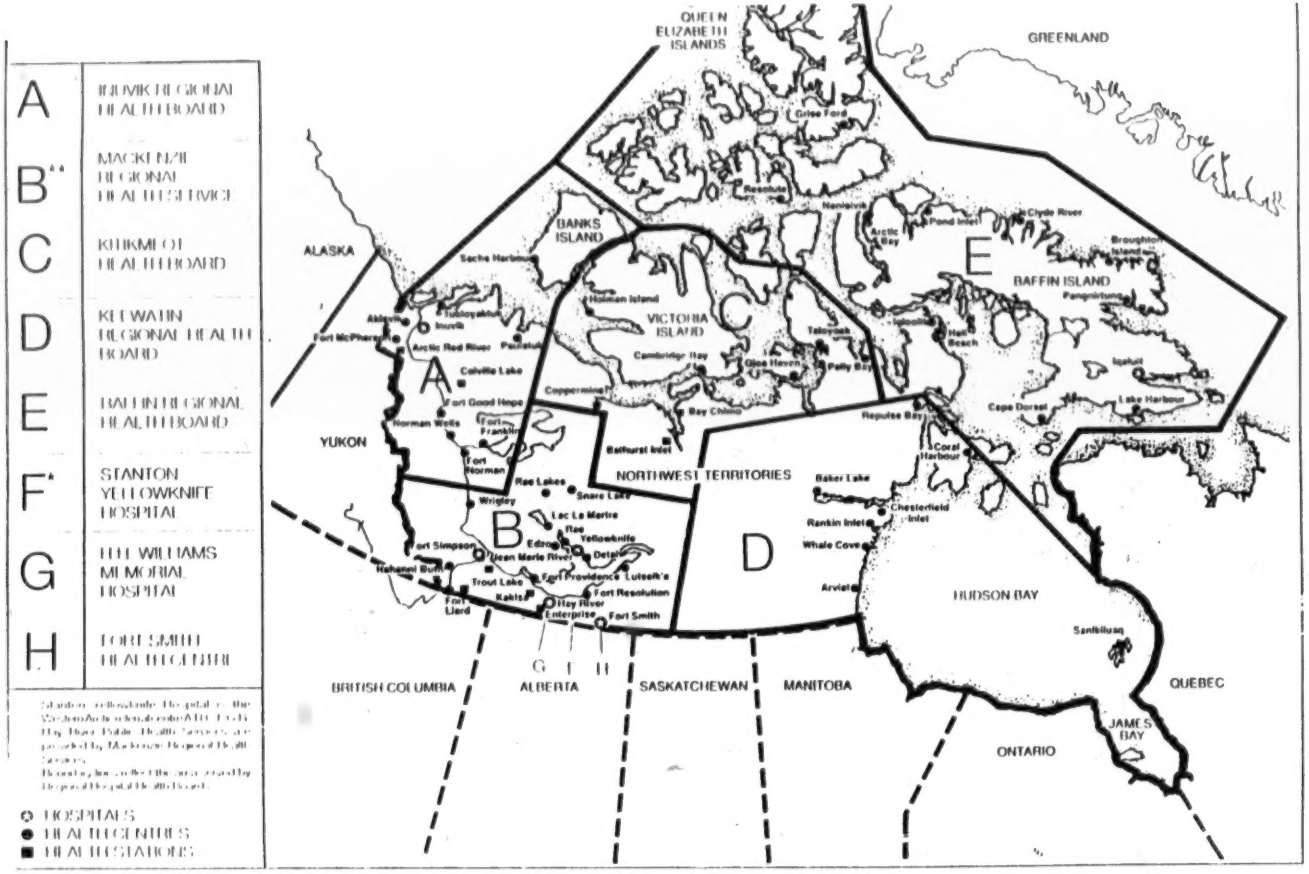
Environmental Assessment Review Panel Hearings into the proposed BHP diamond mine development at Lac DeGras, NT, January -February, 1996.

Interviews with respondents during May and June 1995 as part of research for this study, in Inuvik and Yellowknife, NT.

FIGURE 1

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HEALTH CARE SYSTEM -- REGIONAL HEALTH BOARDS



Appendix A: List of Research Questions

Section One: All Respondents

Education/Organization

1. What is your position title? With which organization?
2. What are the responsibilities of your position?
3. How long have you worked for this organization? In what capacity?
4. What is your education/training/experience background relevant for this position?

Personal

1. Where have you lived in the North (are living), and for how long (in each place?
2. Were you born/did you grow up in the North?
3. Are you Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal? Please specify ethnicity.
4. What is your educational/training background?
5. Do you have other significant experience of a personal or work nature relating to your current position?
6. Do you use traditional knowledge? Specify.
7. Does your organization give you time off to pursue traditional activities, if needed?

Section Two: GNWT Officials

Program Profiles

1. What is the purpose of your position?
2. Do you work primarily alone or with other people? Whom do you

work with the most? (List positions, etc.)

3. Do you interact with community groups, First Nations, or individuals in the course of your work? What is the nature of that contact?
4. What are the goals and objectives of your position /program area?

Traditional Knowledge Use

1. What, in your view, is traditional knowledge? On what information do you base this understanding?
2. Is traditional knowledge information relevant to your program/position available to you?
3. Have you ever consulted your departmental traditional knowledge coordinator? Why?
4. Would any kind of traditional knowledge be useful to your program/position?
5. Do you use it in your program/service? How? Why/why not?
6. Do you think it should be used in your program?
7. Are there any difficulties in using it in your program/service area? What are they?
8. Have you ever had any requests from program/service users which might be facilitated by the use of traditional knowledge? Complicated?
9. In your opinion, are the programs/services in your division administered in a manner consistent with the beliefs, customs, knowledge, values, and languages of the people being served?
10. Do most of the people in your division have a knowledge of TK?

Traditional Knowledge Use - GNWT Management

1. Which departmental program areas have been identified where the study or application of traditional knowledge is appropriate?
2. What services in your department incorporate traditional knowledge?
3. When did the department incorporate TK into programs and services?
4. Is there a demand for the incorporation of TK into programs and services?

   What kinds of requests/situations lead you to this conclusion?
5. What are the obstacles to incorporating TK into programs/services?
6. What factors facilitate the incorporation of TK into programs/services?
7. Do you think the use of TK in programs and services is necessary? Is it useful? Why or why not?
8. How would you characterize the traditional knowledge policy? How would you characterize its implementation in your department?
9. How many Aboriginal employees occupy positions in your department?

   Please specify.
10. Does your department employ any incentives or training programs for Aboriginal people? Please specify.

Section Three: First Nations and Community Organizations

Organization Profiles

1. What is your organization's mission/purpose?
2. Who does your organization represent?
3. What kinds of activities/programs is your organization involved in?
4. Could you give a brief history/outline of why your organization was

established?

Traditional Knowledge Use

1. What is traditional knowledge?
2. On what information do you base this understanding?
3. What is your personal experience of traditional knowledge?
4. Is traditional knowledge important to your organization? Why?
5. Does your organization have any policy or policies relating to traditional knowledge?
6. Does your organization use traditional knowledge in its activities/programs? How? Why?
7. What kinds of resources does your organization devote to TK use?
8. Is your organization involved in any traditional knowledge projects/initiatives?
9. Are any of these joint ventures? With whom?
10. Has your organization ever approached the government in regards to the incorporation of TK into government programs/services?
11. Has your organization ever requested government assistance in regards to using, promoting, or studying traditional knowledge? Was assistance received? Please specify.
12. Does your organization promote the use/ study/ or promotion of TK? How?
13. Do most of the people in your organization have knowledge of TK?

Traditional Knowledge Policy

1. Are you aware of the GNWT's TK Policy?

2. Was your organization involved in the TKWG?
3. Did your organization respond to the GNWT's TK Policy? How?
4. How would you characterize the policy? Why?
5. Is the policy necessary? Why?
6. Is it useful? Why?
7. What purpose do you think it should serve? Why?
8. How do you think it should affect GNWT programs and services?
9. Are you aware of any GNWT programs or services which use TK?
10. What factors do you think complicate its use/implementation?
11. What factors do you think facilitate its use?
12. Has the policy affected the way the GNWT governs or delivers programs and services?

APPENDIX B

Traditional Knowledge Policy

The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes that the aboriginal peoples of the NWT have acquired a vast store of traditional knowledge through their experience of centuries of living in close harmony with the land. The Government recognizes that aboriginal traditional knowledge is a valid and essential source of information about the natural environment and its resources, the use of natural resources, and the relationship of people to the land and to each other, and will incorporate traditional knowledge into Government decisions and actions where appropriate.

This policy is based on the following principles:

1. The primary responsibility for the preservation and promotion of traditional knowledge lies with aboriginal people.
2. Government programs and services should be administered in a manner consistent with the beliefs, customs, knowledge, values and languages of the people being served.
3. Traditional knowledge should be considered in the design and delivery of Government programs and services.
4. The primary focus of traditional knowledge research should be the aboriginal community.
5. Traditional knowledge is best preserved through continued use and practical application.
6. Oral tradition is a reliable source of information about traditional knowledge.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all departments, agencies and employees of the Government of the NWT.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Aboriginal cultural organization**
   Any local, regional or Territorial organization which promotes aboriginal culture in the NWT.
2. **Program department**
   A department of the government which delivers programs to the public.
3. **Research institution**
   Includes universities, research associations affiliated with universities, and government-sponsored research organizations.
4. **Traditional knowledge**
   Knowledge and values which have been acquired through experience, observation, from the land or from